

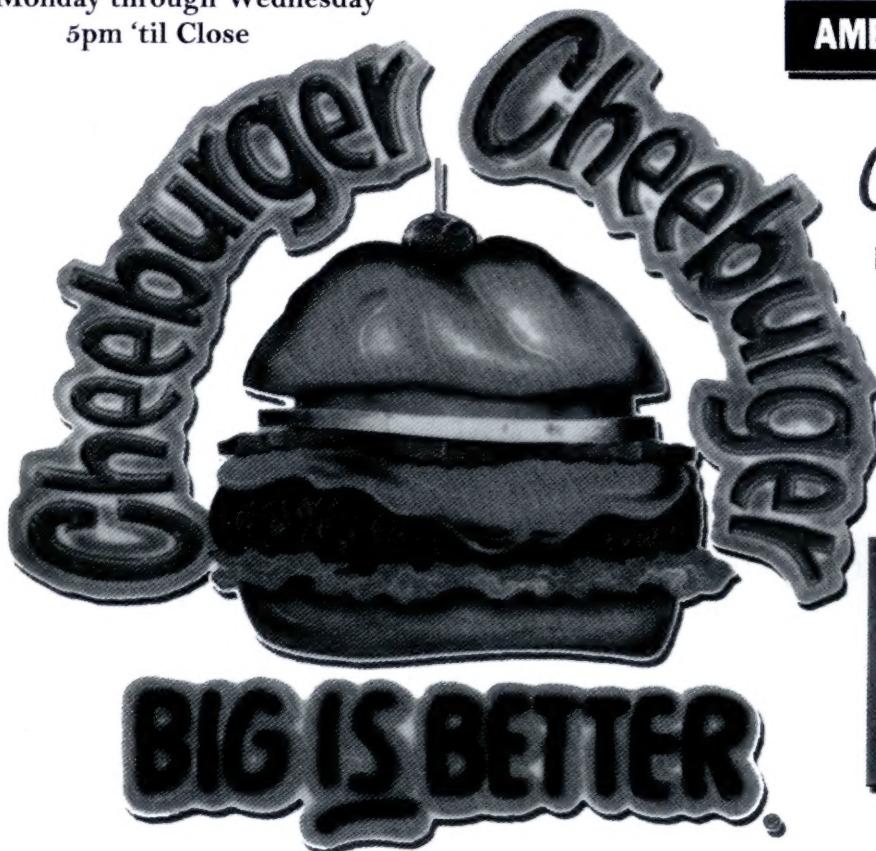
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vol 31, no.2

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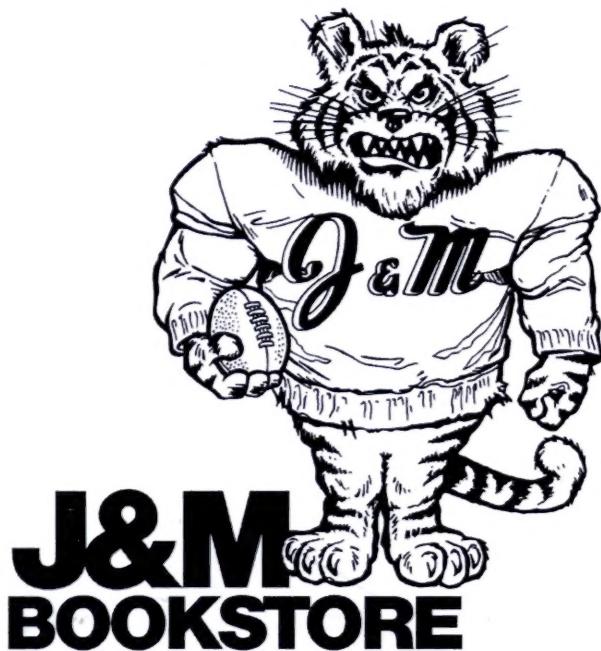
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Submissions featured in The Auburn Circle are accepted from students, alumni, faculty, and staff of Auburn University. Submissions include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, art, photography, and design. Editors review all submissions to select articles and artwork of appropriate size and content for printing. Reasonable care is taken to represent the article or artwork in the form it was intended. Editors proof all submissions for accuracy before they are printed. Photos and artwork are chosen and placed with an article based on theme and design style at the discretion of the editors.

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Editor's Letter

There is a scientific maxim, Occam's razor, that holds that all things being equal, the simplest explanation is generally the right one. This aesthetic of edgy simplicity applies to art as well as science: while striving to interrogate the worlds around us (and within us), one generally finds the most elegant representation to be the most powerful and satisfying. The staff and I strove to keep this in mind as we assembled The Circle this semester, continuing to push our artistic boundaries and experiment, even at the risk of failure.

As a Circle editor you get two shots at perfection. Editing your first issue can be an exercise in joyful hubris as things fall place or so you think. One is tempted to walk around in a romantic haze, grinning smugly to oneself about 'direction' and 'vision.' Then it comes time to do the second magazine and dark specifics like typos from the first issue come lurking. And that's just for starters.

Being editor-in-chief of the Circle has been a joyful as well as humbling experience; if nothing else, while in charge I learned the importance of knowing when to ask for help. I am lucky to have a talented, opinionated staff and ridiculously lucky to have found three graphic design students who were willing to come in, as we hurtled towards deadline, to make the magazine beautiful.

More humbling as well as inspiring, though, is the quality of the student body's work in every genre. As always, the magazine exists so that the student body may have a forum worthy of its talents. This magazine could not exist without your efforts. If you have yet to submit I encourage you to do so as the success of the magazine hinges on our ability to draw on not only quality but also variety.

In conclusion I wish to thank the staff, our graphic designers, the Board of Student Communications, and Tamara Bowden for their tireless efforts on behalf of The Circle. I thank my professors for helping me to better understand and love the craft and power of the written word. Finally, I wish to thank Auburn University for giving me this amazing opportunity as editor-in-chief. War Eagle!



Emily McCann
Editor-in-chief

The Auburn Circle Staff, Spring 2005

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I wanna be a poem

I wanna slice circles
around my neck so deep
that you feel me bleed,
taste the metallic, and tear
your shirt into pieces
to save me

I wanna spit scriptures
that move you from the back
to the front pew
kicking up your heels

I wanna give multiple
mental orgasms to men,
women, and in-betweens,
until each of them forgets
what gender means

I wanna dance a jig, yes
as in jigaboo,
proud that being me means
not being you

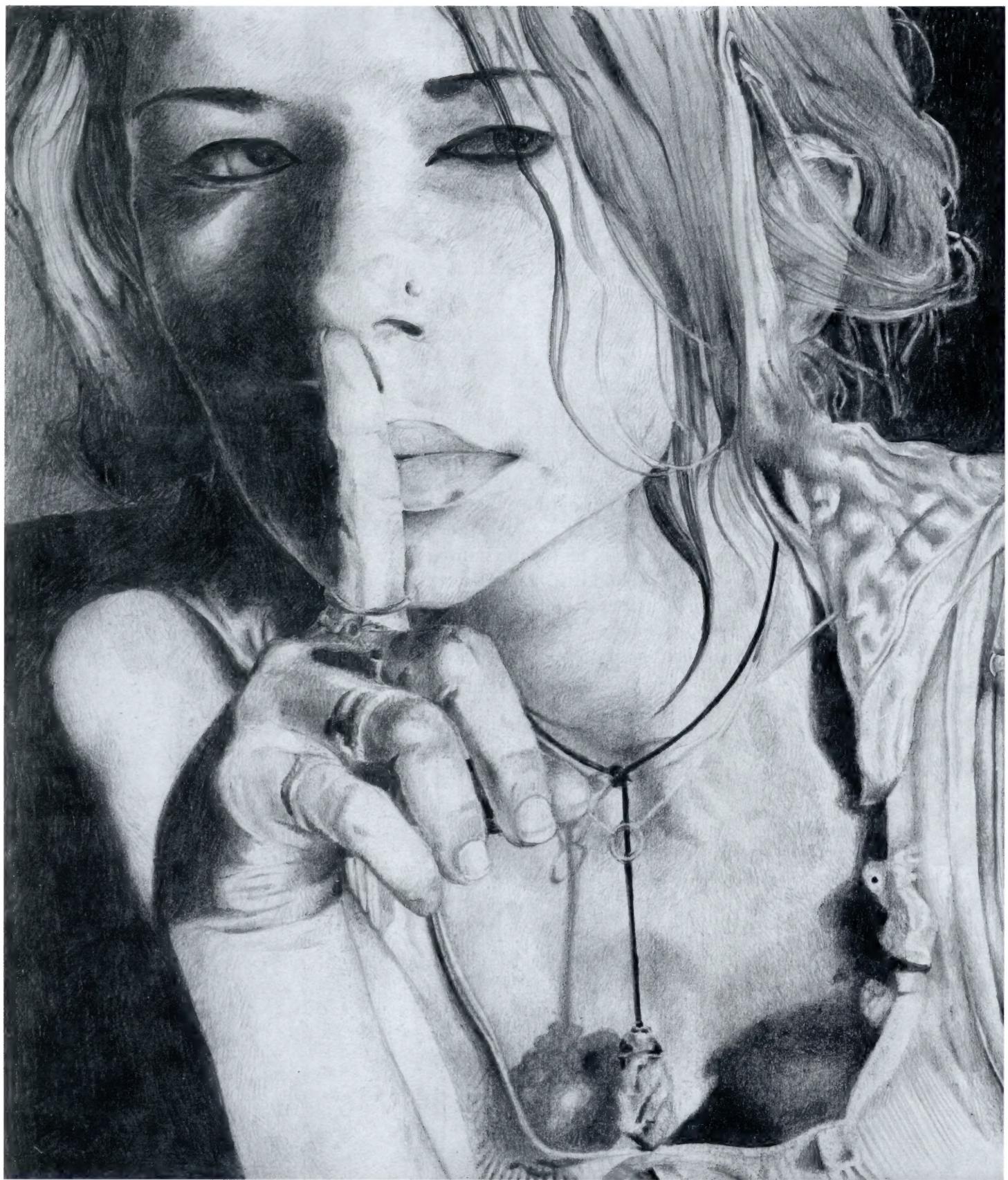
I wanna recreate
that visceral quake you make when
your "favorite" uncle slithers
between your sheets, beyond the moon's glow,
whispering...

I wanna be a crack pipe,
your hand, and the rock that
lulls you to sleep and sends you
into your mother's purse
for change

I wanna be bass lines that turn
back flips, mix with sly
metaphors and signifying quips.

I wanna be eye rolling,
switch finding, closet praying,
fatherless birthday-ing, hand game
playing truth

KanFinae Jones



Title: Hush
Artist: Richard Bramlette
Medium: Graphite

Ten [Easy] Steps for Making Your Own Fashionable Paper Dress

- 1] Attain sufficient quantity of heavyweight paperboard.
- 2] Cut paperboard into strips 1/4" wide [use laser-cutting method for added ease]
- 3] Weld loom from stolen university property, scrap steel, and bicycle.
- 4] Weave strips of paperboard on loom.
- 5] Cut pattern pieces out of woven paperboard fabric.
- 6] Soak pieces in linseed oil for flexibility.
- 7] Sew pieces into [1] bodice, [2] waistband, [3] skirt.
- 8] Sew bodice, waistband, skirt together.
- 9] Sew in zipper for ease of entry and exit.
- 10] Sport fashionable paperboard dress out on the town.

by Lindsay Butler

Title: Paper Dress
Artist: Lindsay Butler
Medium: Paper, notions



View from 9:03

by Jason Odom

I entered through the wrong gate.

But I saw things best that way.

I had no sense of either truth, however, during the initial moments of my visit with history. Heck, at 11 p.m. on the only night I'd ever spent in Oklahoma City, the single thought in my mind was how grateful I was just to find a handful of people willing to venture downtown with me and humor my zeal for the momentous. Taking the wrong entrance was due to both ignorance and enthusiasm.

The giggles from a full day of travel and the late hour scattered long before we walked through the glossy bronze walls of the imposing 9:03 Gate into the noiseless grounds of the Oklahoma City National Memorial.

Into 9:02.

It was then that I realized my folly at the sight of the 9:01 Gate across the vastness of the luminous reflecting pool.

Visitors to the hallowed grounds, I quickly learned from the brochure, are encouraged to enter

via the east entrance for the full effect of the visit. That is where the identical doorway marked with the earlier time stands as a hopeless barrier to the rising sun every morning.

But before it ever held up the sun's incision through downtown Oklahoma City, 9:01 once marked another abrupt stoppage.

Life.

This gate (9:01) marks the innocence of the city, I read with the aid of a street lamp. The West Gate – in opposition – represents 9:03, the moment we were changed forever.

"But where's 9:02?"

My friend Sara, the first to break the silence, looked up from the leaflet to scan the park for an engraving similar to the ones found plainly etched in both gates.

"We're standing in 9:02," Kate whispered – then more quiet as the five of us suffered the chills of moving within a preserved, perpetual moment.

We now had our bearings, but a lesson beyond history was still in the making for me.

The others were surveying

ahead by themselves. I'm more of a slow-going, stop-and-feel-everything kind of guy in these moments. From the shadows of a nearby pine tree, Kevin waved me over to a grassy field on our right.

Chairs.

Rows and columns of stone chairs atop translucent bases, positioned according to the floor on which the victims were found.

Chairs with names and stories.

Trying to picture the person by the name on a given seat will give you a frosty sensation. Graveyards are cold like that.

Tombstones, however, did not fill this ethereal landscape. Instead -- stone shrubs that would never bloom. Lighting them from underneath amplified the sober disquiet. Mixing that with the shadows, I could conjure up 168 distinct ghosts come back to occupy their respective seats.

"Lot of chairs," Kevin murmured. "Lot of people."

Sometimes the rhetorical and the profound are one and the same sentence.

Every other encounter within

the bomb site brought with it both mournfulness and pride. Much to the angst and wit of my companions, I took my time to run a hand over the jagged stone and protruding steel from the remaining foundation that semi-circled the lawn where the building once stood.

There's a spiritual experience in feeling history with your own five fingers.

Or even the one finger with which I dipped into the reflecting pool, only to draw back at once. I don't know how, but I swear the water snapped at me.

"Intended to soothe wounds, with calming sounds providing a peaceful setting for quiet thoughts," Neeley read to us.

All it did was raise the hair on the back of my neck.

Someone took the lead to the other side of the pool, where the leaves of the Rescuers' Orchard flitted in mute stirrings along seven circular tiers of ascending lawn. At the top was an 80 year-old American Elm known as the Survivor Tree. The deep roots of this witness held resolute that April morning, and in agreement the corresponding plaque asserted: Our deeply rooted faith sustains us.

It was here that a genial patrolman stepped in to greet us. He smiled. "What brings you here?" A group of 20 year-olds in downtown Oklahoma City at midnight apparently wasn't the norm.

"Curiosity," I gushed. "Never been here before. Our ministry organization's just passing through for the night -"

"And you wanted to say you'd been here." This pleased him to hear. He gazed over the grounds with affection. Watching over the memorial had obviously been his beat for some time, and my touristy response had yet to wear down his sentiment for the place.

Conversation with the man was as informative as it was pleasant, for he knew a great many details about the memorial that our visitors' guide failed to mention. He even offered to take our picture.

Smiling in the graveyard takes effort, too.

His favor to my evening, however, proved most helpful when he turned away from the pool, the lawn of floating chairs, and even the stalwart old elm tree to point out a graffiti-riddled wall behind us.

"This was painted the day of the bombing by a rescue worker," he said. "Been touched up a few times since, but the message is original."

We shuffled over to look at the pockmarked wall of the Journal Record Building. While we read the preserved note, I tried to imagine some sweat-drenched, worn-out, grief-stricken public servant with lucidity enough on that insane day to vent the world's anguish in black spray paint.

We search for the truth.

We seek justice.

The courts require it.

The victims cry for it.

And GOD demands it.

Kate snapped my picture as I thoughtfully traced GOD. That's the one picture I've kept.

Foremost on my mind sat the chilling memo as we finished exploring, treading reverently past the pool and the lawn, through the impressive vista of the Memorial Overlook -- once the back porch of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building ...

Past the chilly embrace of the daycare's playground and the echoes of laughter from toddlers I knew only in memorialized name ...

Past what's left of the original chain-link fence with all its pictures, epistles and motley collections of personal keepsakes pinned to the wire that stretches for some 200 feet outside the Overlook ...

Back to the 9:03 Gate ...

Lastly on one final saunter down the sidewalk to the "third pine tree from your left, right beside the lawn," according to the officer. Here, the one who is not mentioned once in the memorial parked his homemade bomb nine eternal years ago.

I'd like to say these thoughts all arrived during one picturesque snapshot of me and Kevin, heads lowered in brief prayer, illuminated under the shadows of the innocent pine.

They didn't. Truth be told, these ruminations are as new as the ink on this page.

But I like to place myself back in that one moment, because there I had at least one reflection toward what I now share with you.

Ironic, I thought, glancing be-

hind me. The 9:03 Gate marks the latter time, but that's the direction he came from to park in the lane closest to the building.

Perhaps fitting, though, because he alone knew the great difference that would distinguish 9:01 from 9:03. At that moment in time, he was the arbiter of time. It was just as well to enter from the future he was about to fashion into the present he would soon alter.

And, in the process, make way for the twin gates not yet built on April 19, 1995.

And 9:02 came to pass.

How often do we stand at the "after" moment in our lives? At the threshold of the 9:03 Gate, we humans have this intrinsic tendency to meditate on a 9:02 twinkle in time preserved before us -- be it with scrapbook or memorial -- and agonize over how vivid it remains, how close we are to reaching back into the joy or pain it induced within us ...

... only to lament the fact that we cannot reach far enough.

There are at least 168 sets of families who might agree. Theirs is the distant world of 9:01.

On others levels, there are too many before-and-after times in my life to count by now. There is the first time I said the three magic words to a girl I knew wouldn't always be there ... the thrilling humility of speaking before 150 of my graduating peers one last time ... or losing friends, teammates and loved ones in the most tragic and unfair of ways.

The single comfort left to us may just be a prodding within our souls to pause the next time we catch a "before" instant in the making, before 9:02 changes us without any say-so on our behalf.

We search for the truth.

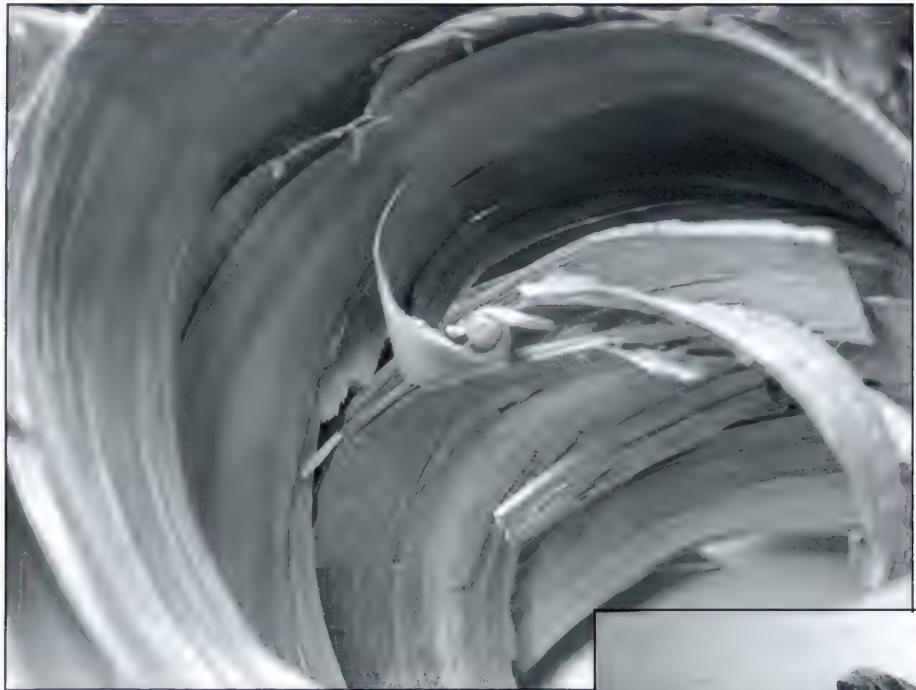
We seek justice.

The courts require it.

The victims cry for it.

And GOD demands it.

After that, all we are left with is the "after" moment and its fruits.



Title: Extrusion
Artist: Kathleen Simpson
Medium: Clay

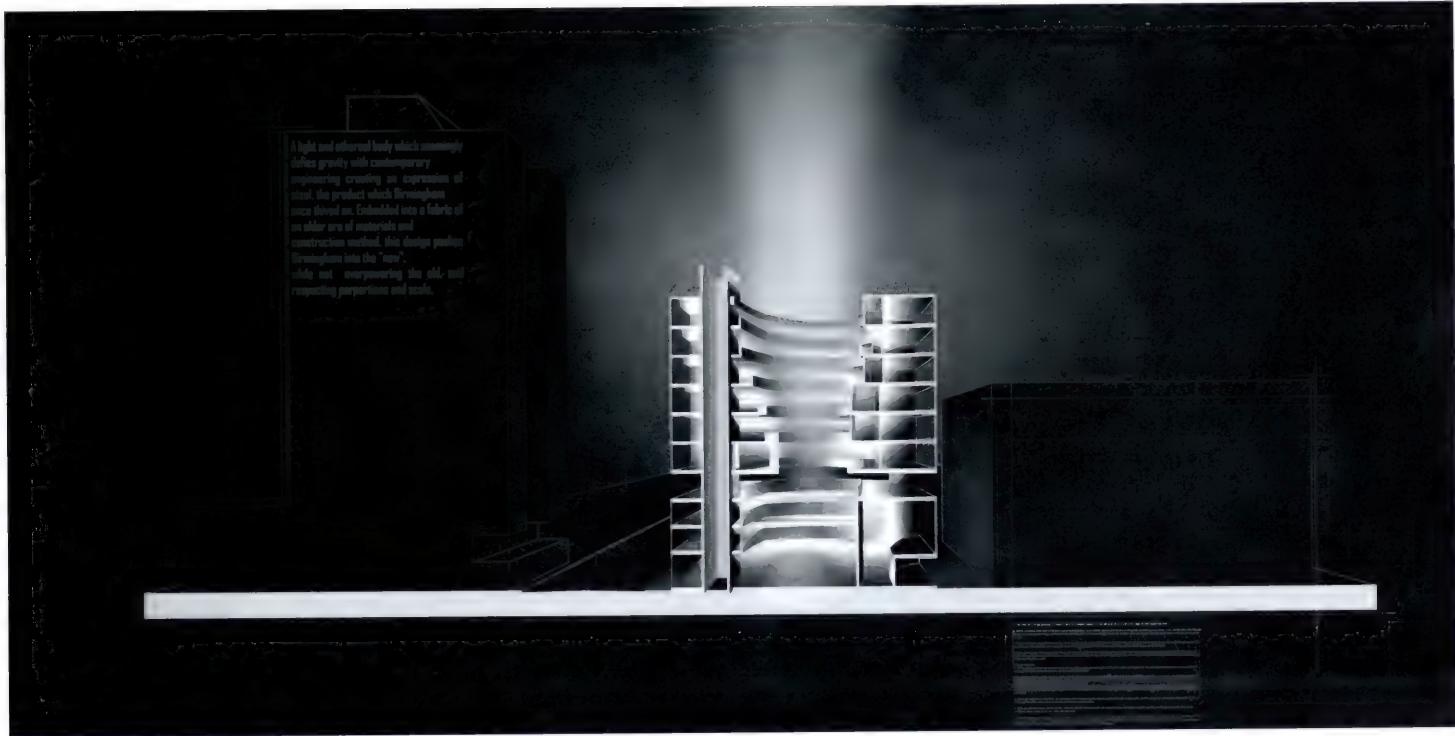


Title: Alagasco Section Perspective

Artist: Richard Taylor

Medium: Architectural design

"A light and ethereal body which seemingly defies gravity with contemporary engineering creating an expression of steel, the product which Birmingham once thrived on. Embedded into a fabric of an older era of materials and construction method, this design pushes Birmingham into the "new", while not overpowering the old, and respecting proportions and scale."



Auburn Architecture

Spreading Sustainability One Project at a Time

by Terran Wilson

Your average Auburn student, if questioned, probably would not know how to define sustainability. In fact, it is likely most Americans don't know about sustainability. When asked just how to define sustainability, the following responses were received from several third-year architecture students at Auburn University:

"It has to do with efficiency. When dealing with architecture, I would say that it deals with efficiency through design and materials in a way that doesn't take away, detract, or deplete from the environment from which it exists." -Joey Aplin

"Sustainability refers to a way of living that provides a comfortable quality of life to those who live now and those

who will live in the future. It's about doing what makes sense for attaining our (and every other living creature's) ultimate goal: continuation of the species. It's about making smart decisions on the things we use in our everyday lives instead of depleting scarce resources and making an unhealthy environment for now and years to come. We humans are destroying the planet—at least in a way. Earth is strong and will continue without us unless we change our ways." -Melissa Schricker

"Sustainability is meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." -Courtney Cushard

"Sustainability is an idea defined by the idea that our society should function with zero waste so we can last forever." -Phil Amthor

"I've always thought of sustainability, when thinking

of the context of our project, as the creation of successful architecture with the use of energy efficient systems and materials, as well as integrating reused and recycled elements in order to minimize waste and both short and long term financial burdens." -Joe Rasnick

Put simply, sustainability is an ecologically friendly approach to planning and design. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System has driven the growing popularity of creating a sustainable environment for ours and future generations. Over the past century, the population of the earth has polluted the environment. As enertia.com explains, "Pollution from the heating and cooling of buildings exceeds that from cars, even in America." So, as the world's second largest industry, building and the manufacture of building materials must be conserved in order to



retain Earth's finite resources. Although the building industry uses renewable materials, it processes them without protecting against degradation.

In this era of technological advancement, we as citizens of the world should ask ourselves why we have been building houses (our largest lifetime purchase) essentially the same way for the past eighty years. Enertia.com expounds: "The home that will literally define our lives for twenty, thirty, forty years into the future, is not future-oriented. The basic goal of Environmental Architecture is simple: attractive, comfortable, affordable shelter that does no harm to the earth in its manufacture or in its use."

What exactly is the LEED Green Building Rating System? According to the US Green Building Council (USGBC),

It is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. LEED continues to evolve today as a foundation for Green building systems worldwide. LEED provides a complete framework for assessing building performance and meeting sustainability goals. Based on well-founded scientific standards, LEED emphasizes state-of-the-art strategies for sustainable site

development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

The USGBC's members—professionals representing all forms of the building industry—developed LEED. They work to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable, and healthy places to live and work. As the council explains, "Members also forge strategic alliances with key industry

and research organizations and federal, state, and local government agencies to transform the built environment".

During the fall semester of 2004, eighteen third-year Architecture students led by Professor Schumacher set out to renovate a 600-square foot space on the second floor of the historical Langdon Annex. Built in 1904, the "Langdon Annex has," Schumacher asserts, "functioned as a home for AU's R.O.T.C., the marching band, the Department of Engineering, and as a studio space for the Department of Art. It has also been the focus of many proposed uses such as the Auburn Art Museum and an administrative office space." The various utilizations of the Annex over the past 100 years proved to be a further challenge for the Architecture students.

Another objective of the project was to introduce modern ideas of sustainability into a society that predominantly favors more traditional styles," comments one student. Schumacher divided the eighteen students into three groups whom she then asked to innovatively redesign three interior and two exterior spaces using their knowledge of sustainable architecture. The interior



spaces include: a secured office for the director; a meeting and exhibition space for small groups, workshops, literature display, and exhibitions; and a work and storage space for student interns and a sustainable materials library. The two exterior spaces include a space for outdoor meetings and workshops, a place that addresses the storage and collection of recyclables as well as a design element that encourages entry and participation in the AU Sustainability Initiative Office. Schumacher describes the design-build process:

After the studio was divided into three groups to tackle studies, each group presented its proposals and design schemes for the renovation. After first designs were completed, further effort was made to contact companies about their specific products and to see if they were willing to help contribute to the initiative. While some students tore down parts of the existing building, other students contacted and dealt with companies. They narrowed down material decisions based on which companies were willing to work with the project. Once they focused on the interior design, they realized that in order for the project to be successful they needed exterior elements to draw people into the building as well as to allow people outside to interact with the initiative space. Another group, then, concentrated on the exterior elements to attract and direct people into the upstairs of the building. The group focused on three elements: a table with a green roof in the front courtyard, some plants indigenous to Alabama, and a sculptural beacon to draw attention to the old building.

Informed by LEED, the design and construction teams studied specific materials and LEED certified buildings. They also researched innovative furniture made out of those certified materials investigated. Students experimented with materials and tried to combine products we use everyday to invent new ones such as rice-crete, a material similar to paper-crete. The students explained that "parts



of the project were designed with regards to materials, others with regards to proportion studies based upon existing conditions within the room, and still others with regards

to actual design-build experiments. Some of these made it to the final product and others did not." For four months, the students fabricated, fine-tuned, and built Auburn Uni-



versity's first Sustainability Initiative office.

In addition to these challenges, the students also had to conform to code requirements set forth by AU. These limits, however, could not put the students' creativity "in a box." One student explains, "The beauty of a design project is that the designing does not stop until the project is complete. The first month of the project was dedicated solely to design, and the remaining three months of the semester were spent building and returning to the design process as [they] ran into problems or got new ideas." They also had to work with campus administration; the students were fortunate in that the Maintenance Facility Staff aided with the project as well.

"The AU Sustainability Initiative Office," explains Schumacher, "received start-up funding for one year, which included \$5,000 from every College on campus as well as the Graduate School, the Library, and the Facilities Division. \$10,000 of the start-up funding was allocated to support the design and construction of the office."

The students discovered similar ground among their varied personal histories in order to realize this enormous dream. Not only did the students learn what sustainability is and how it can dramatically affect everyday life, but they also aided in the development of a relatively new concept (to this community, at least) of an eco-friendly and economical design-build project.

**Special thanks to usgbc.org and energystar.gov for providing information on the Green building process and sustainability practices. Please refer to these web pages for further information and links regarding sustainable building. The Auburn Circle staff would also like to thank Mrs. Sheri Schumacher for her generosity and extra help with this article. A special thanks is also in order for all the third year architecture students who submitted their ideas about sustainability for the article.*

The Birthplace of Jazz

I danced a blues last night
and I can't remember how it went

but I know I woke up in the rafters
totally spent

I twisted and swayed
into a dust-induced frenzy
and sashayed on the corner
back and forth

I did the Charleston
and pirouettes
all in the same note

Now I danced a blues last night
A very righteous one indeed

The kind that widens the dark of your eyes
and makes you tell lies from your knees

I started on my hands
ended up on my feet

I just couldn't stay between the lines
I guess that's what made it
so sweet

I danced a blues last night
The very best I ever heard

I'll never forget the motions
even though I already forgot
all the words

KanFinae Jones

Title: Untitled
Artist: Lee Lerner
Medium: Photography



Title: Ace's Bus
Artist: Morgan Lenz
Medium: Photography



Title: Stairwell
Artist: Jason Lewis
Medium: Photography

Mindless Behavior

Piled upon dreams and scenes of that which was and
that which is to come.

Lingering along lost words,
and those which were spoken yet seemingly worthless.
Swimming toward the forgotten majesty of wandering streams of thought.
Passionate embraces of hands which move along these trails;
waiting to grip to a forgotten memory
that lay trapped within swinging vines.

Pondering existence of such an ungodly place which lay creeping
with murky, cloudy waters.

Sights which are kept unseen to the naked eye,
Movements held in place by imaginary obstacles
waiting to be freed by a lapse of time
and state of mind.

Our deepest secrets make their home in such a place
Churning and gnawing their way out of these confines.....
truly knowing and allowing us to see and overcome
future events.

Struck firmly by a wave of forgetful behavior and an uncaring
attitude.

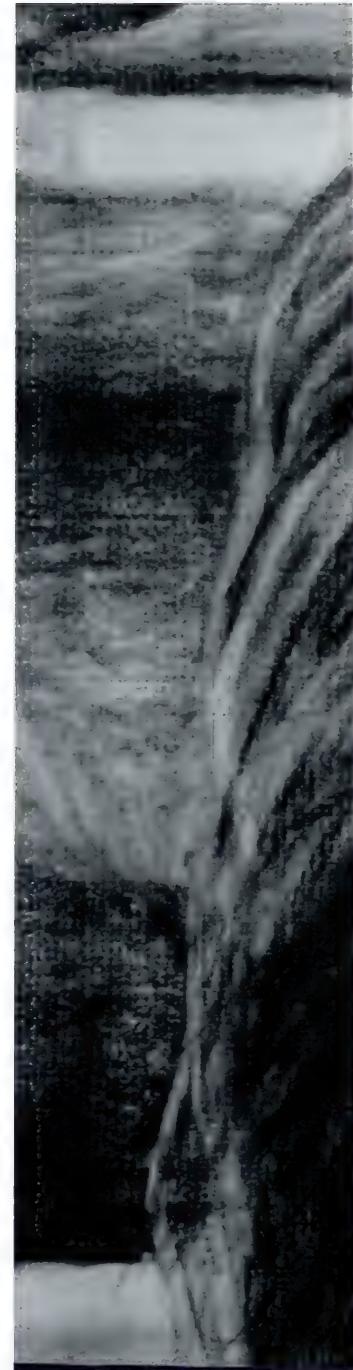
Lose yourself in the movements of space and the strength of
time.

Allow what was to become what is.

Karen Walters



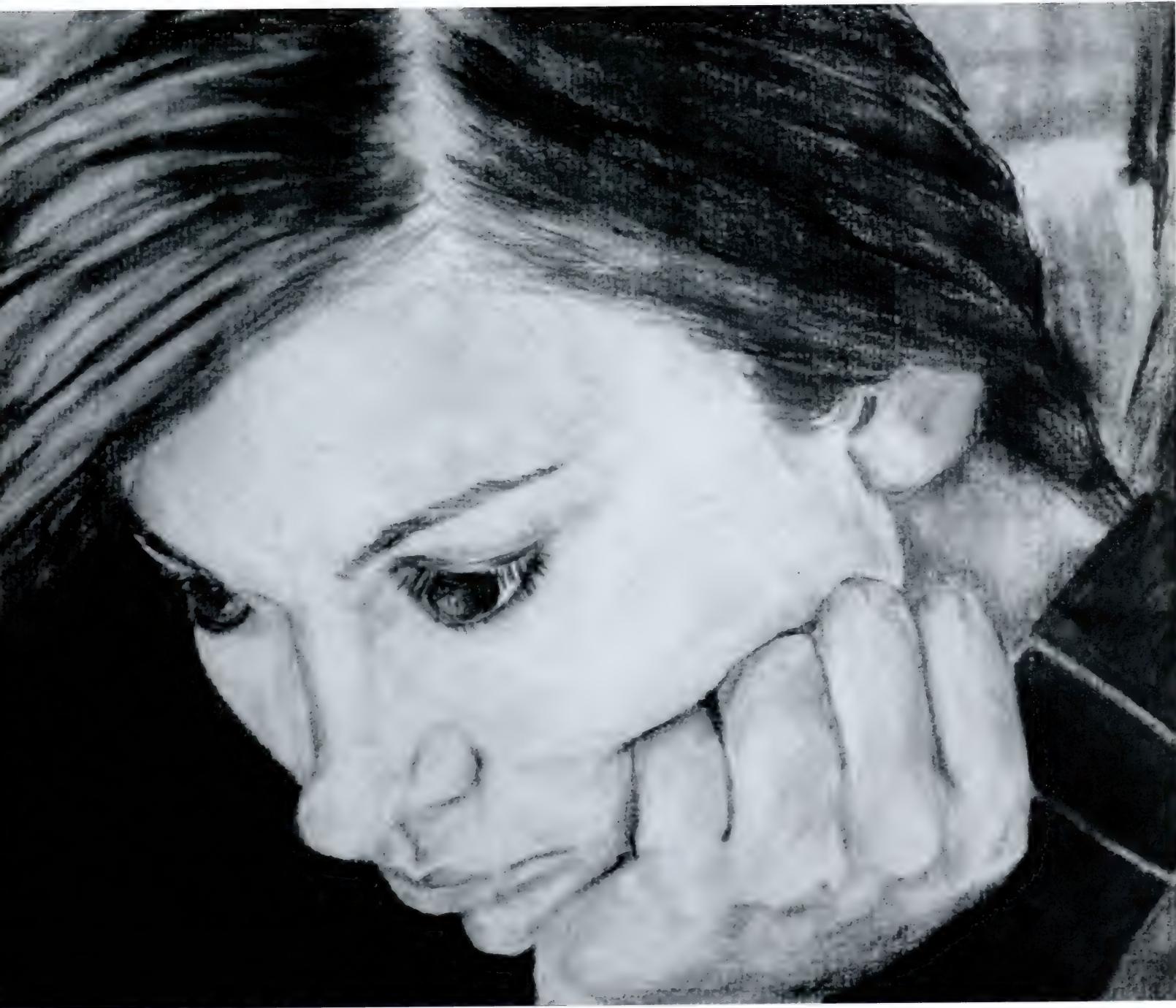
Title: Untitled
Artist: Lee Lerner
Medium: Photography



Funeral Shoes

Black patent leather open-toe stiletto heels.
It was my grandmother's funeral.
My only black pair, and slightly lose
on my thirteen year old feet.
Uncle Sylvester watched my red polished toes
peek out, until I tucked them under the pew.
Once, on the phone with her,
planning our summer tending
her tomato plants together,
I wobbled around on those shoes, thinking
"heel toe, heel toe" so I wouldn't
twist an ankle. The day
she was buried, I winced
at their scuff and clack
on the parking lot pavement,
the wooden floors of the funeral home
the cemetery grass.
After, I imagined some older girl
buying them from the thrift store
to wear for Halloween.

Kia Powell



Title: Graphite Girl
Artist: Terran Wilson
Medium: Graphite



Title: Untitled

Artist: Lee Lerner

Medium: Black and white photography



Blindsided

Masculine aggressor
Seeks budding love
Falls rather quickly
But keeps it bottled up
Schedules date between the two
To entertain who
Would've thought 6 months
Of idle flirtation
Would lead to so much
Futility and worriation
Who says boys aren't supposed to cry
All's fair till love
Pokes you in the eye.

Dimitri Williams

Living with Girls

Sarah stuck a note to the counter with her gum:
"Wash the dishes as you use them."

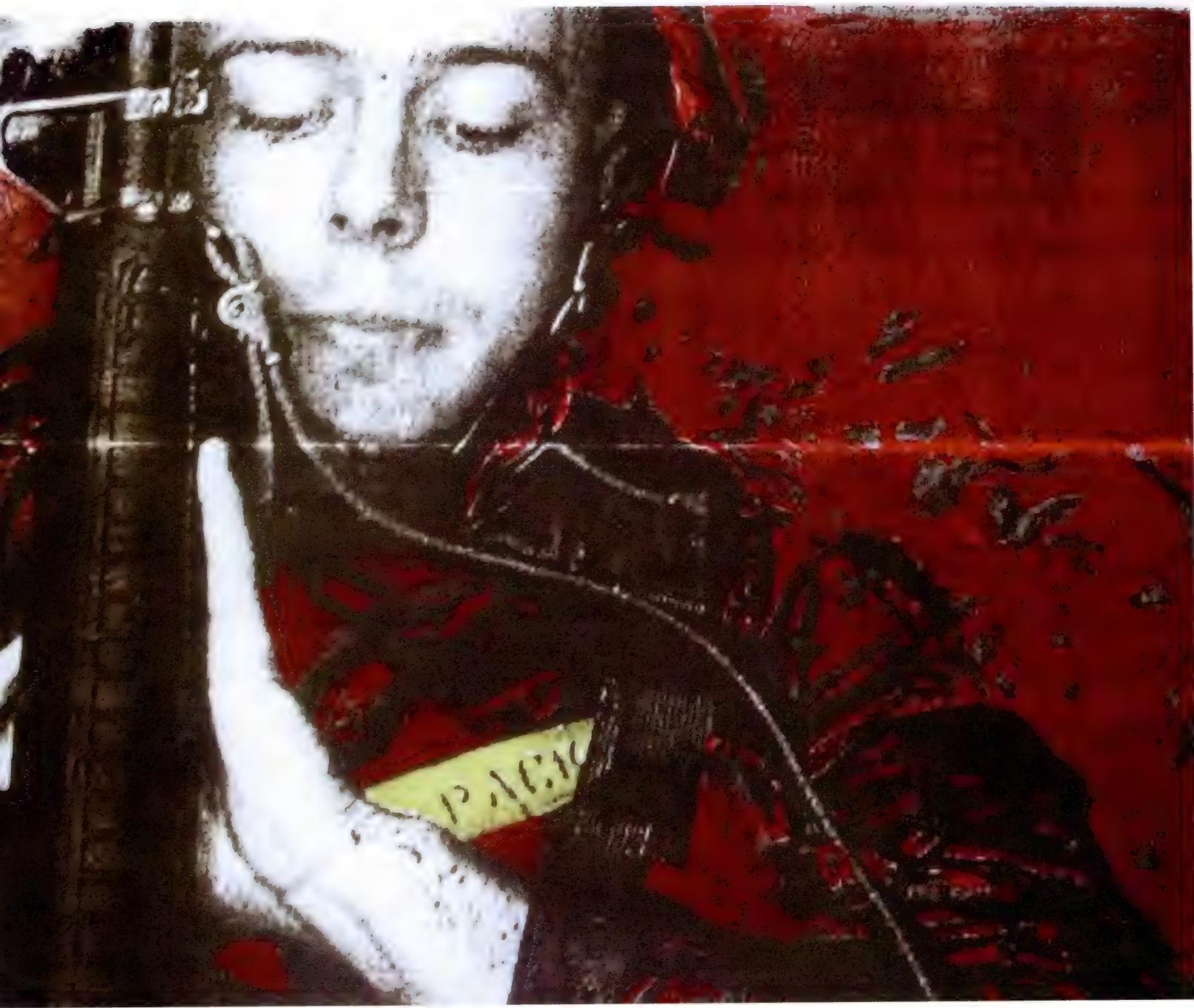
Sarah, you drink your green tea and grape juice out of mugs colored
With Warhol prints, old Marilyn with her half-closed eyes—
You always leave a quarter of an inch to sit and fester
In the cups on your desk until you dump the fetid brew
Into the sink and wait for me to soap away
The stains.

I'd like to write back (I'm declaring war):
It's time we stop pretending to be friends.

We brush our teeth together, your eyes
Darting over my bloated morning face.
You tell me all your secrets as you piss
With the door cracked, how all your attempts
At love will fail because your heart is sour.
While I'm gone I suspect
You search my closet and old documents
For my own heart's flaws.

Sarah, your beauty and mine
Won't last until we're forty,
And neither of us is sane enough to keep a man.
If you don't want to lose me before next August,
Stop searching for dark hairs on my chin, and
Forget about my heart
And then I won't object to disposing of your trash.

Ivy Grimes



Title: Pack 1537
Artist: Emily Scott
Medium: Screen print



Title: Blue Beach
Artist: Morgan Lenz
Medium: Color photography



Title: Ebb: of Sun and Shine
Artist: Tyler O'Connor
Medium: Color photography

Reflections

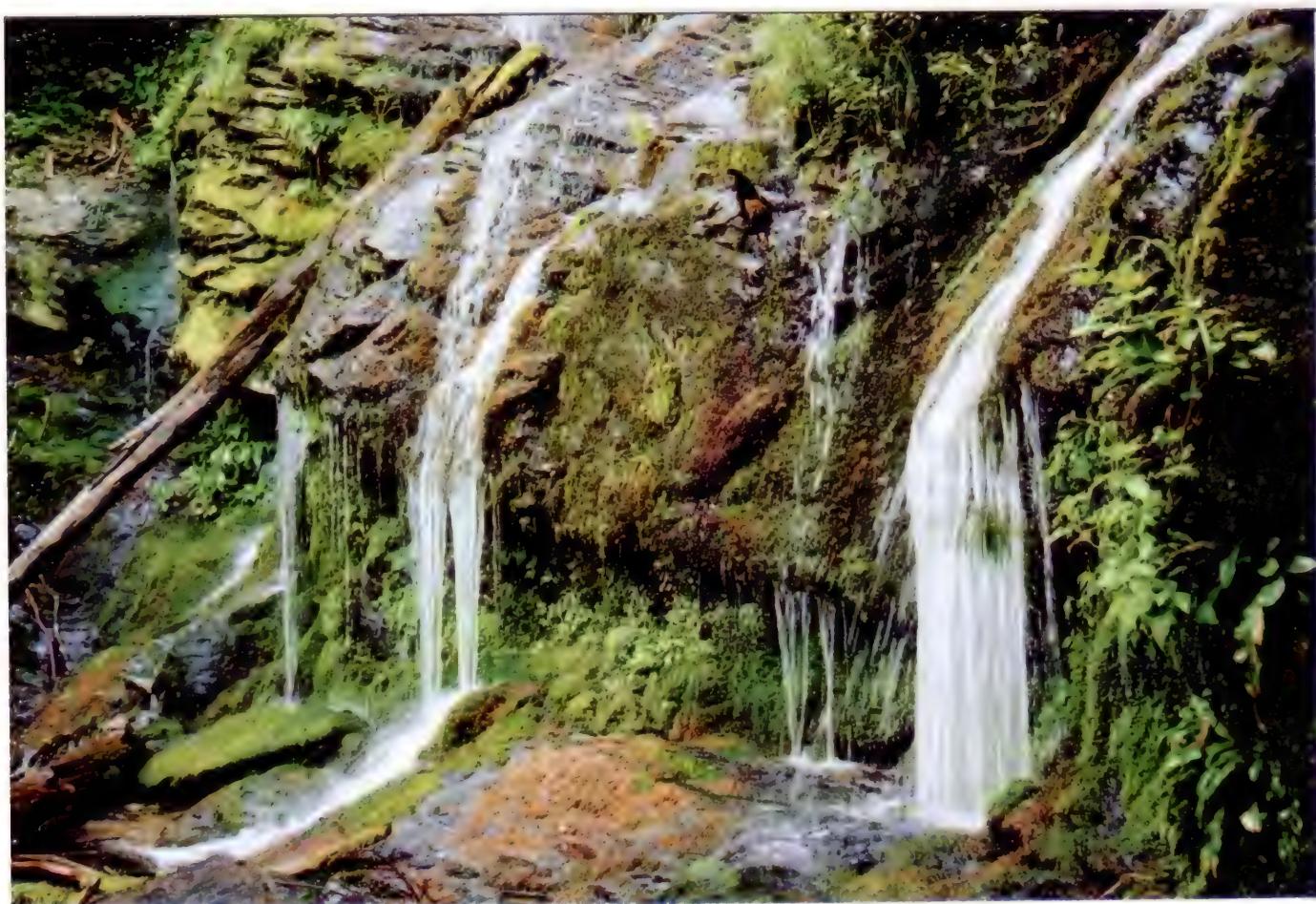
Deep in deaf woods will you whisper
to the hardhearted wind: is it trepidation?
A born-new child,
glorious in that unknown truth,
looking for motive to dread;
yet blinded, by immaturity, of fear lying within only itself.
For only self-adulate reflections can wound.
Decisions eternally absolute.

And you, slowly setting sun,
breathlessly haste to rise, bar never to fall;
liberated are you who haven't apprehension
yet knows no end to your own luminosity.
Most regretted are untaken chances
which befall ceaseless mind whirlwinds
whispered deep in deaf woods!

David Johnson

Top:
Title: Catawba Falls
Artist: Thomas Hoeglin
Medium: Photography

Bottom:
Title: Mountain Woods
Artist: Thomas Hoeglin
Medium: Photography



In Between

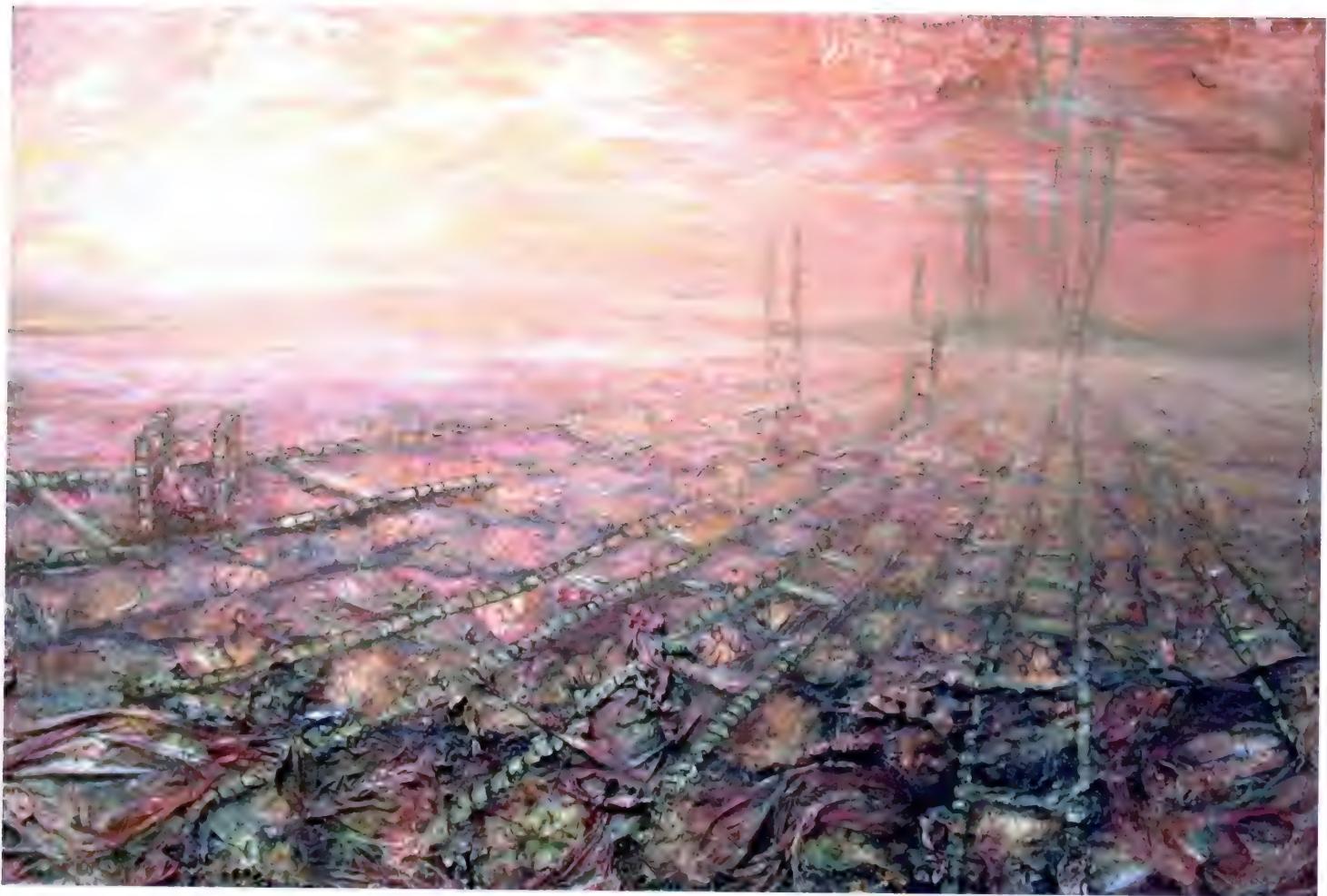
I had always wanted to be kissed in the rain.
But instead I was standing in it. Alone.
Thoughts developed as my jeans began to
soak up the raindrops in an uneven, indistinct
pattern. They were cold and unpleasant.
Refreshing. Foreign particles of a known
substance, soft but hard; they were familiar,
but unrecognizable. These new feelings of
restlessness were like the rain. They swelled
in me like the clouds above my head,
intertwining and joining into a dark mass. I
didn't know. I just didn't know.

The air mimicked the clouds, swirling around
and through my legs, attempting to unfold
my arms and steal my warmth. I wasn't going
to allow it. I squeezed tightly. Shaking. Its sting
was painful and joyful all the same. At
least I felt it. I knew what it was, where it
was coming from. It made sense. I needed it
to make sense.

Looking down at myself, I began to examine
what I knew. My toenails, unpolished and
dirty from the vine charcoal. The paint stains
on the knee of my jeans that he hated. And
my damp, shiny breasts. Shadowed. My
favorite part was my hair. Each strand
accepted the water differently, like water and emotions.
Which hair was I? The saturated or the bone dry?
Perhaps in between? I was always in between.

Raindrops morphed together on the
windshield, just as they would have on a
concrete sidewalk. My thoughts gathered
as the clouds and I was shaking, just not in my
imaginary world of loneliness and self doubt.
I was in my car. Interrupted. He was on the
phone, and I was driving. In between...

Erica Mote



Title: Thinking
Artist: Elena Koulla
Medium: Mixed media

Blood in the Water

The thin ribbons falling
like hair undone loosely;
cascading in effervescent curls
the ends separating into rainbows
of desert yellow and perfect orange
spinning out the secret relations
between current, inertia,
the involuntary twitch.

Katie Baldwin

Auburn Bikini

by Mary Brumbeloe

Drunken partygoers are on the ground, fighting to regain their footings. A microphone stand spins around wildly, catching one guy in the eye. A tambourine falls, seemingly dropped from the heavens, landing squarely on the forehead of a 20-something, blood oozing from the wound. Flashbulbs go off, a clothesline gets ducked, a poster of Bear Bryant is ripped in two.

For 30 minutes, the chaos ensues. Then as quickly as it began, it's over. Drums are broken down, amps are hauled away and 20-year-old Nashville, a self-proclaimed "song-and-dance man" sits alone in a corner recuperating from the brutal beating he's just brought upon himself.

It's the typical scene at an Auburn Bikini show. The band has helped launch a newfound interest in the underground music scene, lovingly referred to as the "Auburnarchy" by Bikini frontman and Auburn alumnus Jeremy Dale Henderson. But what makes this particular band so special? Why are more and more students and locals cramming

into small sweaty living rooms only to dance and scream their hearts out for 30 minutes of pop-punk?

The Sixth Member

Auburn Bikini sets itself apart from other bands because it encourages audience participation. Fans are commanded to sing and shout along, whether they know the words or not. In fact, band members attest that even they don't really know what the heck Henderson's singing about some of the time.

Not only is the crowd goaded into shouting and singing, but if there isn't furious dancing, guitarist Joey Parker will often threaten to stop playing. And he isn't kidding. Parker is serious as death when he demands more booty shaking from the crowd.

At the average show, there are one or two aggressors that take the dancing to a level near a riot. Reminiscent of mosh pits at early '90s rock festivals, there is one distinct difference: It's all in good fun. Everyone gets into it, and if you don't like it, retreat to one of the "safe" corners.

"The band is not about us; it's about everybody else. It's like a community band. Anybody can be in it ... well, everybody is," Parker said.

It's the hope of seeing an in-your-face exhibition that keeps the

crowds coming, and that motivates them to tell their friends about Auburn Bikini.

Cult of Personalities

"No Nashville, no live spectacle, no Auburn Bikini, no success," Henderson said. "If we don't have Nashville the show's nothing. Nashville is the real deal — he's a man's man."

Nashville, an Auburn student, is the band's resident song-and-dance man, but he also pounds a mean tambourine. Like a pinball bouncing back and forth between bumpers, Nashville pings from body to body, pausing only to pull up (and occasionally down) his pants, have a frosty beverage poured down his gullet or to stare into the eyes of a non-dancer in the crowd, as if he's asking them, "Why? Why are you not dancing?"

If Nashville is the outright energy in Auburn Bikini, drummer and Auburn alumnus Jason McGee is the undeniable talent. Not that the other members aren't gifted in special ways, but McGee's timekeeping is legendary in the Auburn music scene. As one of the most sought-after drummers locally, McGee's resume reads like a who's who of popular defunct bands: Jennifer, Mareka, Spikit, Inthealtogther and Let's Fight NASA only scratch the surface.



McGee's blistering intro to Auburn Bikini's "Speedo" usually results in all-around awe from the crowd, and many fans cite his drumming ability as one of the first things that attracted them to the band.

As the band's brute-force thug, "Colonel" Parker, who works at a local beer distributor, provides deadpan comic relief, blazing guitar riffs and just the right amount of angst to keep crowds scratching their heads.

"I think I bring a lot of drunkenness to the band. All it is to me is to have fun," Parker said. "I threw up eight times before the show (Friday) night."

Formerly the frontman and guitarist for local mainstays Babydriver, Parker was forced to wait for his time in the Auburn Bikini spotlight. With Babydriver's demise coming months after Auburn Bikini's introduction, Parker sat on the sidelines until inevitable band drama led to an opening. "I just wanted to play in a band. Somehow I managed my way into it," he said.

Serving as the token female band member, bassist and Auburn alumna Brooke McCarley struggles to keep a leg up on her male bandmates. Perhaps being 6-foot-3 helps. McCarley led the Auburn volleyball team in kills in 1997 and was selected to the 1999 All-SEC first team. But rock 'n' roll's call sounded sweeter than that of nets and balls, so McCarley picked up her bass and the rest is history.

Occasionally McCarley can be convinced to sport a special outfit for Bikini shows, although Henderson claims she agreed to wear a

bikini, she was spotted wearing a vintage Auburn cheerleader outfit at one of the band's gigs at Buffalo's American Grill in January.

Last but not least is the band's 300-pound frontman and sole lyricist, Henderson. He's got a lust for Auburn and its football team that can elicit everything from eye-rolls to triumphant high fives. While the other band members provide the sonic foundation of Auburn Bikini, Henderson's lyrics and vocals give the band what could arguably be considered its shtick.

"I have to sing what is in my heart, and that is Auburn. We sing about football games," Henderson said. However, Nashville is quick to point out that Auburn Bikini only sings about one particular football

game, the 1972 Iron Bowl, in the crowd-pleasing "Punt Bama Punt."

"We're not just a band about football songs. There's songs about girls in town," Nashville said.

"But every song references Auburn," Henderson was quick to add.

The songs' subject matter ranges from those about that famous local lemonade, the War Eagle throb, Henderson's deceased kitten and even being "felt up a little at Felton Little."

Henderson says he loves Auburn all the way to his core, and he has the extensive Glomerata collection to prove it. He even said he thinks the band's spirit played a role in the football team's flawless season. "The psychic power of this band contributed to the perfect season. I seriously believe it," he said.

Magic in the Whole

Parker said he didn't think the magic of Auburn Bikini would be possible without each of its parts. From the crowd's role to each member's unique contributions, the band has tapped into something special.

Auburn Bikini cannot be summed up by any one definition. It's not just pop-punk, songs about Auburn, a "really tall chick," a larger-than-life shaker-wielding frontman or a half-naked wildman. Auburn Bikini is nothing more or less than a guaranteed crowd pleaser, no matter what equation defines it.





Unconscious

It happened:
My body with a frightening determination
of its own
forsook me—
a dimming spark impelling
an intractable vessel—
past kneeling parishioners.

It wasn't a spirit from without
that did me in
unless you count
the incense—
nor a demon from within
despite the memory
of cold curious fingers
that crept down my throat—
food poisoning maybe—
both possibilities concealed
in my retelling:
"I once passed out in church
During the Kyrie."

Such understatement permits images,
Ideas: flesh, spirit,
transcendence, communion.

But I was betrayed on the vestry floor
where stunned boy scouts stood around
the girl who collapsed, limp
on the ground after asking to be pointed
in the direction of the girls' room.
They stood around staring
as the silence grew around her—
saw her eyes fly open:
tiger's-eye, hard and glinting
like two points of light on pallid wax.

Emily McCann



Title: Shapes in Motion
Artist: Emily Scott
Medium: Acrylic

Intent

The death of innocence
Flaunted by the victor's form—

The thoughtlessly malicious non-intent
Displaces the elegance
Of danger's grace
The treated skin
Of a mild beast—
Pacific inefficiency—

So quickly adapts
To the air of
Stealth, strength, and
Beautiful ill-intent.

Charlotte Richardson

Photograph Ashes

Soft strands of pungent smoke spin
wildly above the Polaroid memories
of teddy bear tea parties
and hot pink peel-away nail polish.

When stop sign boundaries and four wheels
limited our world to three blocks,
and high heel fantasies paraded
on make-believe catwalk of carpet floors,
I thought we would laugh forever.

Swirls of sundry emotions soar overhead
with silent hauntings of little girl reveries.
Torrents of tiny tears caress
the soft fickle flame and fall down to mingle
with hot wax and photograph ashes.

Flaming shadows dance on my wall,
a slow and silent ballet of light,
as memories dance and twirl in my mind
in rouge and satin dresses.

I never expect your death to end
our lives together so soon,
but here I am, burning our memories
while you wait for me to join you again
in another game of Chutes and Ladders.

Only we could have conquered the world
with out soft, tattered blankies tied
around our thin shoulders,
but how can I conquer the world alone
when all I have are these photograph ashes?

Melissa Orange



Title: New Orleans Door
Artist: James Lawton
Medium: Photography

Freedom Carries a High Price

by Mary McEachern

In front of him, all he could see were lines of men, a sight that had become familiar with the past 30 days. He had to fall in line several times a day, during roll call, mealtime or just walking from place to place.

Now he was lined up to go into a huge building that he had never been in before, but would soon find out its purpose. He was told to strip away his clothes and he obliged. The idea of refusing such a request never crossed his mind. The next demand was his hair. Using sheep shears, the guard cut all his hair off and moved him on down the line.

He was inside now, in a room that had showerheads all around him. What now?

He was in a former concentration camp. Thoughts of a gas chamber ran through his mind. He waited for what would happen next. When he looked up, a feeling of relief washed over him. It was actually HOT water! This was the first time he had had a hot shower in so long he had forgotten what a luxury it was. The guards have him soap and he lathered up to enjoy this great thing, but he was cut short. Before he could so much as rinse off, he was forced outside in the freezing snow with no towel.

He had just been through the "Delouser."

Such was life in Stalag 17-B. Separated from outside contact by

two barbed wired fences charged with electricity; this was Walter Sowell's world.

Fifty-six years ago, Sowell arrived at this prisoner of war camp after his B-17 "Flying Fortress" was shot down on a bombing mission over Germany. Today he has come to Jack Smith's journalism class to share his experiences from W.W.II with Auburn students, who on this day learned just how expensive the price of freedom really is.

Hanging on every word, the students are amazed at Dr. Sowell's uplifting and positive attitude as he recounts his war stories. "War is something that none of us like," he tells them, "I hope our love of liberty can overcome all that."

When one student asked him what he missed most of all while he was in the camp, Sowell answered, "Any kind of edible food would have been great."

For the 20 months that Sowell spent in the camp, he ate only a diet of hard, black bread and a thin soup. Peasants raising cattle and truck farming populated the area surrounding the camp.

"They collected materials from mowing the field, and whatever came up in that was in our soup." That included worms, always eaten, because they provided badly needed protein. He ate bread made out of rye, sliced beets, minced leaves, and flour with "splinters longer than your finger."

It was not unusual for the guards to use physical force on the prisoners. Sowell found this out right after his plane was shot down, before the German soldiers took him to Stalag

17-B. The first thing he remembers after dangling from a tree in his tangled parachute is waking up on a hard, cold floor, with every muscle in his body aching.

"They (the Germans) took their frustration out on my body," Sowell said.

In his underwear, a guard poked him to wake him up so that he could be marched through the streets. German people jeered at him. German soldiers removed the flap of his long johns leaving his bottom exposed. German families threw rocks at him, spit in his face, or tried to kick him as he passed by.

The compounds that hosted the prisoners of 17-B were designed to hold 240 men, but at least 4000 men were crowded into them. One lump of coal was permitted for each man in the barrack. The men would often sleep two to a bunk for added warmth since there was not enough blankets to go around.

As the months dragged on, Christmas passed by twice. Some POWs in the camp died. Sowell watched their funerals from the window of his barracks. Some tried to escape and were shot as soon as they were seen by one of the guards who manned the watch towers. Armed with 20 mm machine guns, the guards scanned the area, using searchlights throughout the night. Other prisoners died from the bad conditions and brutal treatment they received. Prisoners often suffered extensive bruises when the guards struck them with their gun butts. Sowell never gave up.

"Where there's life, there's hope," he said.

But Sowell and the other members of the Army Air Corps yearned for a way out. "We constantly tried to escape," he said. And they almost did. They worked to build a tunnel running under the fence, only to see it get filled back up when a guard stepped in it.

Finally, on April 8, 1945, they got their chance. The Germans were losing the war. Although 900 men were too ill to make the march, 4000 POWs left Stalag 17B and set out towards the American lines in their march to freedom.

"It was as good as it could be without any food," recalled Sowell.

The Red Cross parcels were given to each man at first, but as supplies ran out, the food was only given to every fifth man.

"Everything we had we shared," said Sowell, "We had to stay together."

They marched 281 miles together until they reached a Russian prison camp in Braunau, Austria. There was no available housing, so the men worked together to cut down pine trees and make small huts while they waited for the Americans to come.

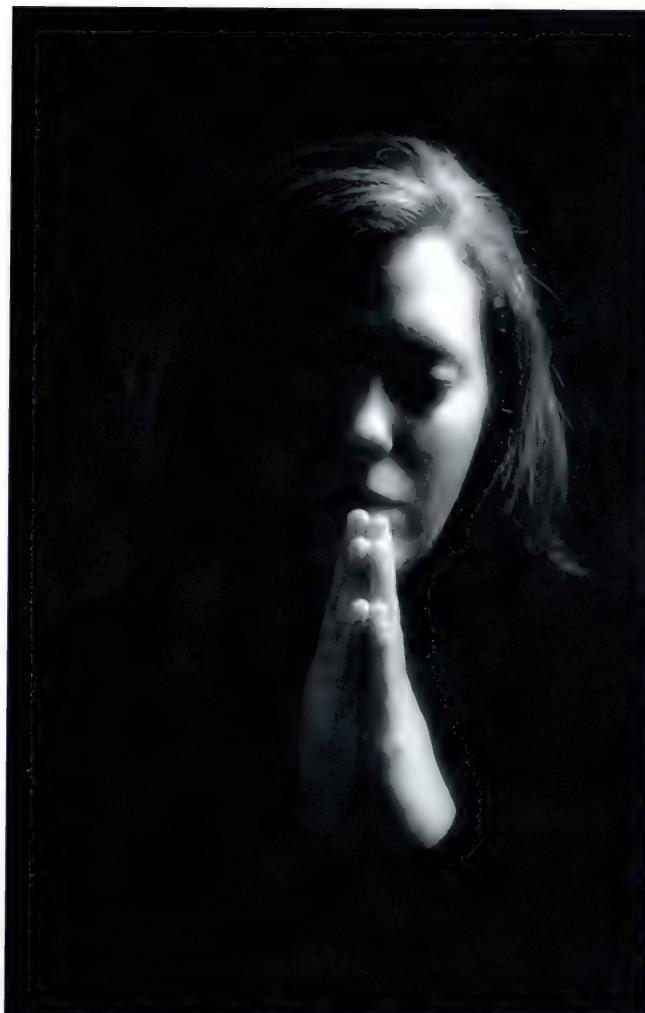
A few days later, six men came through in three tanks to liberate the men. After capturing the rest of the German soldiers, they set the prisoners of war free.

"In my limited vocabulary, I cannot express how I felt that day... it was a great day, I know that," Sowell said.

A small boat had been used to haul supplies during the war was now bringing the American soldiers home. It was appropriately called the "Liberty Ship." As the ship sailed past the Statue of Liberty, Sowell and all the other men who were packed tightly on the deck stood at attention as long as they could, proudly saluting the grand lady who had stood for what they fought for. "There was not a dry eye on the boat" recalled Sowell.

The next morning, he went to New Jersey to get paid. When the clerk asked Sowell how much he wanted, he just thought of a number-\$150. She pulled out three crisp fifty dollar bills. "It seemed like a lot of money at the time," he said with a smile.

From there he continued his "Wonderful Life," as he refers to it in his book. He came to Auburn for a B.S. and M.S. degree in agriculture,



Title: Leighanne
Artist: James Lawton
Medium: Photography

then earned a Ph.D. in agronomy from Purdue University. He then came back to the small but beautiful town of Auburn to work as a soils specialist for Auburn's Cooperative Extension Service. He retired 21 years ago as a supervisor of county agents in Southeast Alabama. He resides in this town with his wife, Inez, whom he has been happily married to for 52 years. Told that her husband inspired young people with his messages of freedom, she said, "Not a day goes by he doesn't inspire me too."

During the war, Sowell endured everything from near starvation to the humiliation of "The Delouser," all the while counseling those in need of guidance or offering an uplifting word. "I've been to the top of a mountain and down to the lowest valley, and I've enjoyed every minute of it," the veteran says of his life.

He was seen as a mentor to those around him in the camp, as well as

the students around him today at Auburn University. Until recently being restricted to a walker, Sowell made it a point every semester to go to Jack Smith's writing class and speak to students about his experiences.

"To think that someone who was my age could endure so many negative things and still be such a strong person is inspiring to me," said one of the students, Heather Smith of Dothan.

It wasn't always easy for Sowell to talk about his trying times during the war. "Admitting that you are a POW takes a lot of will power. It's kind of humiliating in way." But Sowell enjoys talking to young people, who are "more interesting than older people (to share information with)." His advice to the students: "Be vigilant. Freedom is most precious." This could very well be the most valuable lesson students ever learned in a classroom.

Closed Stacks

There's nothing like a bit of mystery and intrigue to get one interested in a book he or she is about to read.

by Alicia Cafferty

While we librarians might refer to it as the cave or the dungeon, patrons know it as closed stacks. Where is it that we disappear to when you've made your written request for a medical or maybe geological journal? Think the dusty old bookstore where Sebastian finds the mysterious book of *The Oracle* in *The NeverEnding Story*. By knowing the story behind the search you may find the daunting subject of, say, didactical experiments on gravitational lensing more exciting than you might ever have imagined. If the thrill of the hunt for a book—the mystery and intrigue of where a book is found, like a great used bookstore with a lot of character—sparks your interest, closed stacks may blow your mind. Like an escape route in a murder mystery there are moving bookcases. Though the result of their function may not be as cool as finding yourself in a secret room, they do allow for almost double the book volume in the basement, helping our library keep its rep as second best to Harvard in this aspect. The movable bookcases were built so that by turning a handle, similar to that of a ship captain's or bank vault's wheel, the cases move apart or together, parting and diminishing aisles so that books can be reached and space condensed. Adding to the glory of finding old bound periodicals among the vaulted shelves—on average materials in closed stacks are too old for the main floors of the library, yet not old enough to be in special collections—is the scent of old paper and the remnants of pollen-like dust on a staff member's shirt. From experience, it is easy to get lost among the journals in search of a call number that...wait... doesn't match the volume date? In all, this experience can lend to the result of coming back to the circulation desk with a break of sweat, frazzled hair, the dust shadow of a book that's been pressed to the chest, and, of course, if we've made it, your requested journal or 20. So next time you fill out a closed stacks request form, and you're waiting for your texts, think of the journey being made by your friendly library staff person and the impact that book may have on your life--just because books tend to do that.

Not Your Grandmother's Book Club

by Eden Sears

The Auburn University Book Club run by the RBD Library is an exciting organization, to meet people, and a place to discuss a variety of interesting topics, this club involves no rushing, nor members' fees. The only qualification is literacy (and even that can be overlooked if you're a great conversationalist)! The Auburn University Book Club meets towards the end of each month on the second floor conference room of the RBD Library. There are two convenient sessions at 11:45 a.m. and a 5:00 p.m. you can choose to attend either session. Too busy to read? Reading the book although suggested for your own enjoyment is not completely necessary: just come prepared to have some great discussion on many controversial issues. Recent book club books include *The Day the World Exploded: Krakatoa* by Simon Winchester, *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury, *The Time Traveler's Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger, and *Reading Lolita in Tehran: a Memoir in Books* by Azar Nafisi. These books of the month are often selected through suggestions by book club frequenters or by the organizer of the book club. These books are chosen because their contents, issues, and themes are conducive to interesting conversations, which is the foundation of the club. Each book of the month can be found in the library or is on sale in the University book store for a 15% discount. For further information on the Auburn Book Club or to check this month's book the website is <http://www.lib.auburn.edu/bookclub.htm>. Happy Reading!

Women's Studies at Auburn University

by Ivy Grimes and Emily McCann

We've come along way, baby? Here are just a few encouraging statistics about the status of women at home and abroad:

- women account for 16% of total enrollment in U.S. engineering programs
- even though males and females are approximately equal in college enrollment
- only 25% of full-time professors in the U.S. are female
- only 11% of full-time professors at Auburn are female
- in some parts of the world where girls are the last in the family to be fed, women only account for 10% of total protein consumption

Where can you find a frank discussion of these issues at Auburn? Why, maybe by investigating our own Auburn University Women's Studies program. We, the writers of this article, consider ourselves to be reasonably politically aware and maybe even (don't tell anyone) feminists, but even we were ill-informed about this course of study.

So we took our ignorance to Dr. Mary Kuntz, who has directed the program for three years in addition to being an Associate Professor of Classics in the Foreign Languages and Literatures Department.

First of all, she told us that the

Women's Studies minor has been around for over 20 years. Although it is interdisciplinary with courses related to women's issues in various departments, the program was recently united by an introductory course: WMST 2100, Introduction to Women's Studies. Students can complete a minor by taking this course and fifteen additional hours of coursework in the Women's Studies curriculum in 3 different subject areas. This spring semester, for example, you could have taken Culture, Marriage, and Family in the Anthropology Department, Psychology and Gender in the Psychology Department, Human Sexuality Over the Family Life Cycle in the Human Development and Family Studies Department, and many other similar courses to count towards your Women's Studies minor.

The introductory course goes beyond bra-burning and to discuss a wide variety of women's issues. Dr. Kuntz says she would especially like to offer a more international perspective to the class. "The thing that concerns me is that to most students, we are the center of the universe." One especially prickly international issue debated in the introductory course is the conflict over the status of women in countries like Afghanistan and Iraq where the traditional patriarchal social structure is being

forced to compete with more liberal Western attitudes towards women. If Afghani women want to wear veils, why should we stop them? But have they really been given enough information to decide what they want? Professors in Women's Studies try to give their students an opportunity to think critically about questions like this.

In spite of Dr. Kuntz's concern that her students are ignorant of many international problems, she was nevertheless impressed with her students progressive perspectives on some women's issues – particularly at a conservative campus like Auburn. "I asked everyone in the [Introduction to Women's Studies] class - where do you see yourself in five years. They all had careers in mind. Even though I might have been teaching conservatives, I was teaching modern women who wanted their own careers."

If Auburn is so conservative, we wondered, who is taking WMST 2100? Dr. Kuntz said that her students are pretty diverse, ranging from devout Greeks to radical feminists (not that you can't be both) to even a few guys. The more diversity among the students in this class, the more open and interesting the dialogue will be.

College Is So Cool; And Then There's Duty

by Courtney Anne Mazzola

It was a soggy Saturday night in a small southern college town--the kind of night that puts everybody in noisy plastic jackets and frizzy ponytails with the agenda to just forget about the week and the weather.

I rounded up an aimless group of weekend dawdlers and we did the only thing any of us were willing to do: snag an empty table in a downtown Auburn bar and mingle as the rest of the town filtered through.

One of these filter-through-ers happened to be a guy I knew in high school. He strolled confidently

up to our table in his fresh frat-at-tire and casually pulled up a chair to join us. He's three years behind me in school, so this is his first year in college. As we were chattering a lull broke in the conversation. For some reason he took this as an opportunity to lose all self-control; bursting forth with glee and clenching his fists he exclaimed, "Oh my God, Oh my God!" He punctuated these outbursts by pressing his clenched fists down the sides of his face. We all just looked at him, a little startled, waiting to hear--well, we didn't know what we were waiting to hear. And then it came, erupting across the table like a nun at a pool party: "This is just so cool! I can't believe I'm actually in college!" He screeched--more or less a bit intoxicated from the bliss of the college experience. He suddenly put his fists down and relaxed his face, realizing he was in the company of upperclassmen. We were no doubt a little unsure of how to react to this eruption of raw thrill, but after a momentary swap of haggled glances, we laughed like

mad and carried on the night in the usual humdrum mode.

The next day, I told my older brother about this unforeseen animated moment. He didn't just laugh and brush it off the way we had the night before. He reflected for a moment and said, "Yeah, you know for my first three years at college I'd walk by the stadium on my way to class like this," and he dropped his jaw, cranking his neck sideways and upward as if peering into the face of the jolly green giant offering him a piggy-back ride to class. "But," he said, "I don't think I ever voiced my awe."

None of us do. The truth is, I still after three years of season upon season of college "can't believe I'm actually in college." We forget just how "cool" it is finally to be a part of this long-anticipated atmosphere. Once the sleepless rage of football season ends and the first month of spring semester deposits a winter chill, the back-to-back social events abruptly halt. Students like me who don't flock home

or take to the life of the weekend road warrior don't feel like exerting the energy to be creative just stick around. The solution of what to do is always, "I guess I'll just go downtown" — as if it's a disenchantment.

But it's these hapless nights that can result in, if not the best memories, the most fortunate chances to meet people we'd normally never encounter. Since everyone flocks to basically the same places, I stumble upon friends of friends, the people I've grown away from, and the people they've since befriended. These nights have even enriched my academic life. I've gotten to know those people who campaign for student government offices so when I see them in suits on campus they can personally greet me, which makes me feel significantly involved. There's always bound to be a face I recognize from classes, and whereas the classroom setting might somewhat handicap cordiality skills, a downtown night makes not producing at least one friend impossible. In addition, these scenes often generate opportunities to mend past misfortunes. One night I found the guy whose frozen French fries I stole freshman year to reduce the swelling in my eye where a car door hit me in the face — and apologized for stealing his frozen French fries.

And after these nights when good times have accidentally found Auburn's weekend stragglers, hindsight reveals that an uneventful schedule has once again coordinated the creativity that was previously too much effort. I find myself glad my original plan to drop spring classes and go shovel manure at some ranch in the Smokies just to reclaim my sanity didn't work out. I might still be prone to bouts of the crazies but that guy now knows I feel remorse for his vanished frozen meals, and I've made academic chums. Football season rarely fashions academic chums— or "academic anythings" for that matter. Besides, manure will still need to be shoveled come summer.

I realize college would be not only cheesy but also downright irritating if we all conversed frequently about the marvels of "college life," but there's a standard to this charade that we perceive to be an obligation. The freshmen are perpetually excited and the upperclassmen have forgotten why. The fad for eagerness is a first year phase, and it teaches the same



Title: Time
Artist: Elena Koula
Medium: Mixed Media

lesson every time: enough of this unproductive social scene; it's time to buckle down.

The "I'm not a freshman anymore" attitude is not the most essential element for college success. It's the element that makes the journey through academics a job and not an experience. Our perceptions have been standardized to recognize those moving through core classes as having room for irresponsibility and as the only opportunity to have fun before immersing ourselves into a major. These perceptions insist that life cannot be as fun once we complete the introductory stage.

This standard of realizing that it's "time to get serious" is the attitude that will paint the remainder of our lives as a responsibility, a schedule, and a duty to be taken very seriously. The problem is not that this is a fallacy; it is that it's a misinterpretation of life's most mandatory components. If the

"freshman" enthusiasm is professed as folly, making its enthusiasts fools, then life will develop into a world of work.

The freshman boy in the bar was so amazed with his momentary presence. I imagine most of us feel this surrealism periodically no matter how old we are. But why do we shake it off like it's idiotic? Why don't we "voice it" somehow in everything we do? Why can't the academics be enthralling, and why does this independence that intoxicates us originally not cause us to blissfully anticipate even more the approaching years rather than dread the days of duty?

It's because we accept stereotypes as truth: class is a requirement and "boring" weekends will prove themselves to be boring. And even though we find in looking back that these were the most randomly enriching, the next "boring" weekend or required class is once again expected undeniably to be

dreary and uneventful.

Little assumptions such as these condition the mind-set that will control us for the rest of our lives. They make us think constantly ahead, forgetting the moment. We train ourselves for the extraordinary through superficial tricks. "Well," we say, "spring break and luaus and sunny weather will be here soon." Or "Only another year until football season!" Indeed we are justifiably excited. These statements are not initially debilitating or unhealthy, but what about when we all have to go out into the "real world?" Our duties will be like the boring weekend or the serious class. We'll be saying, "I only have one vacation this year" and "I can't wait until retirement."

Duty doesn't have to deprive us of enthusiasm. It could be enthusiastic itself if we would allow elevated moments to be a part of our lives. Zeal seems impractical, so it is cancelled out. The boy in the bar allowed his grand moment to be a part of the immediate experience; and it was inspiring. In his own way, my brother allowed the surrealism of walking to class beneath the towering Jordan-Hare Stadium to be part of an otherwise adverse obligation. He gazed upwards into that great façade and recognized that it was "cool" to actually be here-- even walking to class. I gawked up at it today. I tripped on a construction block-thing, but the looming grandness of the stadium really does stir a compelling fascination into a simple mid-day stroll. I'm really in college, and that's exhilarating.

Recognizing the wonder of simple moments such as these exalts those moments, allowing extraordinary elements to linger in the obligations to follow. Therefore, it is through a mind-set that acknowledges the tiniest tinges of exhilaration or adoration that life's inescapable duties are not obligatory miseries but worthwhile experiences. And it is when life is an experience and not a requirement that it is always enjoyed with the attitude of an awe-stricken freshman enamored by the college atmosphere.





Title: Untitled
Artist: Nathan Heald
Medium: Photography

Small, Pink Skate

by Julie Hinz

Lena sat at the round, wooden table in her kitchen, household chore checklist in one hand, steaming cup of coffee in the other. She had always hated the bitterness of coffee, but lately she had found that it kept her focused. She needed focus.

Three weeks before, Lena had suffered the loss of her five-year-old daughter, Bethany. Bethany had been hit by a drunk driver as she was riding her bicycle down the sidewalk in front of their house. Though she had sustained heavy damage to her brain in the accident, the little girl had remained alive, but in a vegetative state. Lena and her husband, Charles, made the decision to let Bethany be removed from life support, and she died soon after.

She needed to focus. I have to keep going, she told herself time and time again. She constantly felt her mind tugging her to the present, wanting her to realize that things were different now, but she refused to listen to her mind. I have to keep going. I still have to live.

Lena didn't change her schedule. She did everything just as if Bethany were still there with her. She made Bethany's favorite meals

- spaghetti with the sauce separate from the noodles, never mixed, and roast beef. She ran water for Bethany at bath time. She drove to Bethany's preschool in the mornings when she would formerly have dropped her off and picked her up. She had every minute of the day planned around Bethany. Every minute except her nap time in the mid afternoon. When she didn't have things to do for Bethany, like during nap time, it was extremely hard for Lena not to think of Bethany. So she drank lots of coffee, and she cleaned everything.

It was two o'clock, the middle of nap time. It had already been a rough morning. *It gets harder every day.* Lena shook her head and closed her eyes, hoping to stop thinking. She had already finished all but one of her many chores for the day, and there was still another hour of nap time to go.

The phone rang. Lena uncrossed her legs and traversed the bare expanse of tile floor across the kitchen to where the phone hung on the wall. She propped the phone on her left shoulder as she answered, "Hello?"

"Hey." Charles always called during Bethany's nap. Lena suspected that he knew how she dreaded that time of day. "How's your day going?"

"Oh, it's fine. Just the usual, really."

"You should get out of the house this afternoon. The weather's great today. I was thinking that maybe I could leave work a little early, and we could go over to the park for a while. Take a walk or something."

Lena knew that if she could see his face he'd have that concerned look that he wore so often lately. What do I have to do to convince him that there's nothing to be concerned about? I'm happy! "I really can't do that tonight. I have to get tomorrow's chores done tonight since I will be out all morning tomorrow."

"What's tomorrow?"

Lena picked up the phone cord and twirled it between her fingers. "You remember. Bethany's school is doing a play. I'm in charge of the backstage area. Our Bethany has the best role!"

She heard him sigh into the phone. His voice was soft, but stern. "Darling, Bethany had the best role. She won't be there tomorrow, just like she wasn't there last Tuesday when her class had that field trip to the museum. Don't put yourself through this again."

She counted the petals of the flowers on the wallpaper while he talked. She'd heard it all before.

Countless times. "Don't worry. I know what I'm doing."

"No, you don't. You embarrass yourself. The other parents don't know what to say anymore. Bethany is gone, Lena. Let go."

She sighed in frustration. He didn't understand her reasoning. *He never understands anymore.* "I promised her I'd be there for her, and I will. I have to help backstage. I promised."

She knew he wouldn't argue anymore. He always let her win. "I've got to get back to work." He mumbled something else about new accounts, but she didn't listen. "I love you."

"Bye," she said. She placed the phone back on the wall. She needed to do something to clear

her mind again. Cleaning always worked. She headed for the pantry - the one item still on her checklist for the day.

Lena entered the pantry and began to rearrange things. Alphabetizing cans was a simple enough task to put her mind at ease. Lena had bent down to grab a can of creamed corn from a lower shelf when she spotted something very out of place.

One of Bethany's small, pink roller skates was lying on floor of the pantry behind a tub of birdseed. Lena gasped at the sight of the skate and covered her mouth in shock. Charles had gathered most of Bethany's toys, clothes, and other things and taken them to her room - the one place Lena did not continue her daily Bethany

rituals - so that Lena did not have to face the added pressure of seeing Bethany's items around the house.

Lena recovered her composure. She laughed out loud. "Bethany, you silly girl! You know that the pantry is no place for a skate." Her eyes darkened. A strange feeling of anticipation built within her. I have to wake her up. I can't *have skates in my pantry. I have to remind her not to put her toys in mommy's space.* Lena grabbed the skate and proceeded to the stairs around the corner.

Up the stairs, down the hall, second door on the right. Bethany's room. "Bethany!" *She knows better than to leave her skates in places where they don't belong.* Lena marched toward the door. She expected to find Bethany hap-



Title: Hand and Foot
Artist: Amy Scott
Medium: Graphite



pily at play – jumping on her bed or drawing colorful pictures. Her fingers caressed the door knob. She hated lecturing the child, but she loved Bethany's apologies, full of "I love you Mommy"s and little girl kisses.

Lena opened the door. "Now, Bethany, you know that –". Lena was frozen. Her muscles were stiff, her body numb and cold. The emptiness of Bethany's room was unexpected. It was too still. Lena's mouth fell open, and she turned her head from side to side, examining the room. She hadn't been in this room by herself since the funeral. She assumed Charles had been here. He had straightened the room and made it neat and orderly.

"No. No, this is wrong." Lena couldn't overcome the tranquility of the room.

Her wandering eyes fell on Bethany's bed. It was in the corner away from the room's large window. Bethany was afraid of the windows at nighttime. The bed was made to perfection – its red and white checked comforter smooth across its surface and its five throw pillows stacked neatly at the head. Bethany's bed would never be that neat. As soon as Lena would make the bed, Bethany would be there, jumping on it.

This is some horrible joke. Lena laughed out loud, and glanced behind her, still expecting to see Bethany's smiling face to appear from around the corner. "Yeah. Just a joke. It will be okay," she said, trying to calm her heart which was now racing in her chest. She was finding it increasingly hard to breathe, and her breaths came in ragged shudders. Her eyes darted around the room again. Everything was wrong. Bethany's

books were organized on their shelves, not lying in random locations around the room like they should be. Her crayons were in their box, her dolls positioned with neat care on the window seat.

Lena shook her head as if to clear the images she was seeing. *Who would do this to her room? She will hate this!*

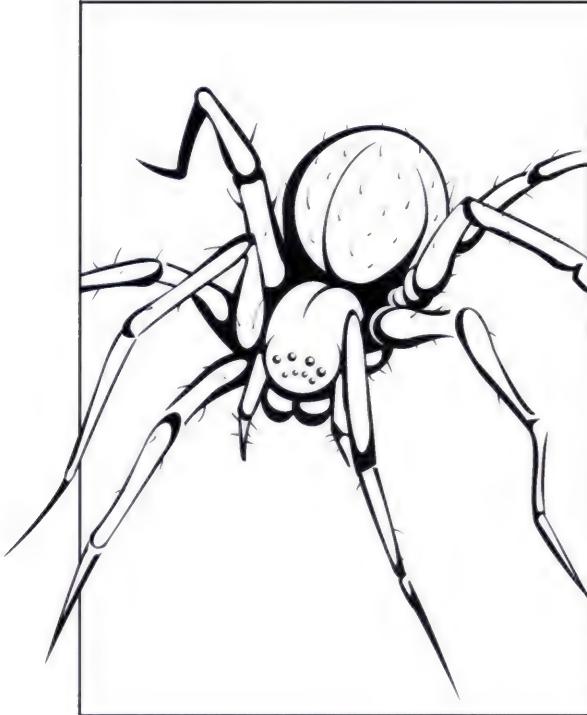
Lena suddenly dropped the little, pink roller skate that had been stashed under her arm as she rushed over to Bethany's drawing table. She grabbed the box of crayons, dumped it out onto the table, and threw the box across the room. Crayons of every color rolled onto the floor as she moved to the bookshelf. She snatched book after book from the shelf, throwing them in wild directions, leaving bold scratches on the walls where the books hit and bounced off.

The whites of Lena's eyes shone as her sights again fell on Bethany's solemn looking bed in the corner. She had to fix it. She had to make it the way Bethany would want it. She ran over to the bed, her shoulders shaking from her labored breathing, and began to pull at the comforter. She brushed the pillows off the bed with a flailing arm, and then began to pound on the bed with her fists. Her fists fell harder and harder onto the bed as she poured her rage and grief into them. Lena felt her determination melt away. With a sorrowful moan, she crumpled to her knees, sobbing her first tears since Bethany's funeral. Her salty tears soon turned the red of the comforter on which she had buried her head to a deep maroon. When her knees felt too weak to hold her any longer, she sank down to the carpet by the bed. Her mournful cries filled the lonely room, reverberating off the lofty ceiling.

She stayed folded into herself on the floor, crying, for a long time, unable to move. The full

weight of the events of the past three weeks had finally taken its toll. When she was finally able to compose herself, she opened her eyes again. Through tear-heavy eyelashes Lena saw Bethany's favorite stuffed pony that she had slept with since she was an infant half-hidden under the dust ruffle of the bed. She picked the toy up with gentle ease, almost afraid that if she wasn't careful, it would fall to pieces. She pulled her fingers through the pony's mane and tail. Her eyes brightened at the memory of Bethany twisting its hair with her fingers as she sucked her little thumb. Lena touched the pony to her face, savoring the remarkable scent that was her daughter's. The simple smell elicited another shuddering breath from Lena, and she had to close her eyes to stop the tears from coming again.

Gathering her strength, she set the pony down and raised herself on unsteady legs. She stood up, straightened her shoulders, and tucked a loose strand of hair behind her ear. She filled her lungs with a deep, cleansing breath and reached down to pull the comforter the rest of the way off the bed. Her small hands smoothed the sheets, tucking in the bottom and sides, and then she put back the comforter, adjusting it so that it hung equally on all the sides. After replacing all of the five throw pillows neatly at the head of the bed, Lena knelt down and picked up the pony again, cradling it in her arms like a newborn baby for a brief moment before nestling it in the middle of the bed. Shoving her hands into her pockets to keep them from shaking, she backed toward the door and out of the room. With red rimmed eyes, she watched the stream of light flooding her daughter's room from the hallway narrow and fade away as she shut the door with a slow, sorrowful creak.



peacock eyes

i'm wearing peacock eyes today
a dead man's eyes today
green and gold
lashes trimmed in crimson
dripping down the edges
writing small lyrics in the corners
with iridescent glitter.

Katie Baldwin

Title: Spider
Artist: James Lawton
Medium: Illustration

We Die as Ants Die

No ant cries when a fellow ant dies
There is no funeral procession
The dead are simply moved aside and the colony moves on untouched

Are we so delusional to think, somehow, we are different?
We prepare empty empathetic flowers
And think our lives are like moves that begin, climax, and end,
But there is no action- falling or dramatic
And the congratulating credits will not roll
We will simply pass like an ant into an unknown hole.

Mark Wise



Blindspot

Title: Blindspot
Artist: James Lawton
Medium: Illustration



Title: Columbus Meets the Gates

Artist: Amanda Herron

Medium: Photography

Nectarines For Lunch

Still moist
From condensation in the plastic bag
Sitting now empty before my refrigerator,
The fruit is chill and soft.
I let it sit too long.
My finger makes a minuscule divot in one spot.
I make a note of it
For when I begin to slice.

I've found that it's simpler
To stand over the sink and slice fruit;
Pull away that first halving of the whole
And slice it ever smaller.
My knife is long for the job,
But it suffices.
I needed the width of the blade for balance.

The surface is slick,
Plasticine in its smooth appearance,
Mottled gold and deep magenta.
The edges where the seed attached
Are darkly fuzzed and look almost furred.
They leave my fingers stained with a brilliant, glaring red
When I pluck free the pit
Which is soft and sticking.
Again, I let things ripen too long
And am visited with sweet, gooey punishment
Caught beneath my nails.
They say behind every accident is an intentional act.
Sometimes I think they're right.

Katie Baldwin

A Brief Study of the Uncommon Mind

by Ben Martin-Bean

The title of genius is among the highest honors that can be bestowed on a person. Whether he be an artist, scientist, musician, or author, the genius represents the apex of human achievement. These extraordinary individuals frequently have unusual and idiosyncratic characters. Unfortunately, the details of their lives are often forgotten, leaving us to wonder just who this exceptional person really was....

It is often said that what we know about William Shakespeare's private life could be written on the back of a postcard. However, several newly discovered writings from the late 16th and early 17th centuries are shedding some light on the Bard of Avon's personality. The recently unearthed memoirs of contemporary playwright and friend Ben Jonson offer us an interesting new picture of one of literatures greatest geniuses. Jonson describes

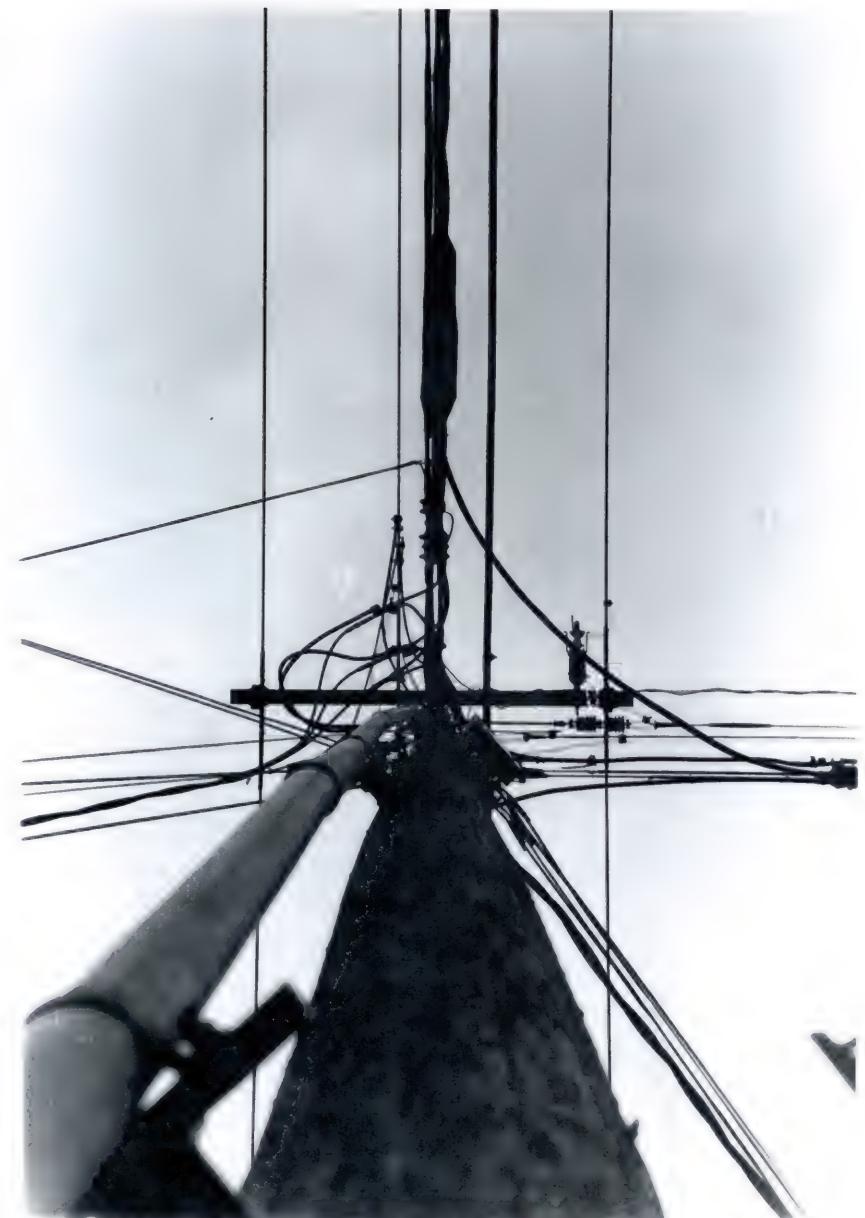
Shakespeare as "a most barbarous gentlemen; a breed-bate, quick to violence and circumstance." Even Jonson, who was himself known as a quick tempered and rough man often seems disturbed by some of "crazy Will's" savage behavior. He recounts a dispute one morning between Shakespeare and a London fishmonger. During an argument over the price of salted herring, the shopkeeper made the mistake of calling him a "rascal and a base knave." Shakespeare responded by dragging the man from his stall and sadistically beating him in front of his two young children. A constable was eventually summoned and Shakespeare was forced to flee. Although scholars debate the reliability of this account there is further evidence to indicate he may have had a surprisingly fierce and unpredictable nature. A leaflet distributed around the south bank of the Thames River in the winter of 1598 promises a reward for any information leading to the arrest of a Bill Shaxspere. He is wanted "on suspicion of contributing to the violent and untimely death of Mary Bridgestone, a harlot of the west theater district." Although it is impossible to know whether the wanted man is in fact William Shakespeare, the charcoal drawing printed on the poster bears an undeniable resemblance and, as Jonson often states, "William didst love the whores." Before he abandoned the idea to instead write Venus & Adonis, Shakespeare spent a

few weeks working on a narrative poem entitled Hark, I Shall Crush Mine Enemies. All that survives of the poem is three lines quoted in a letter to Kit Marlow. The content is unsuitable to reprint here.

Leonardo da Vinci is a rare example of genius recognized in his own time. His paintings and frescos alone have assured his place in history, but it is his skill for scientific research and invention that set him apart from his contemporaries. Unfortunately, as is often the case, his genius was accompanied by an eccentricity bordering on madness. A new exhibition at the Leonardo Museum in his home town of Vinci displays some of the inventor's most outlandish creations. The "steam powered midwife," for example, was one of da Vinci's most ambitious inventions. In the fourteen hundreds childbirth was often very dangerous. Leonardo believed that this machine would greatly reduce the number of infants and mothers lost during the birthing process. The contraption, composed mostly of brass and Dutch elm wood, is controlled by a complex network of gears and powered by a large cylindrical pressure boiler. Unfortunately, he did not have time to complete the machine before the duke of Milan, dismayed at the amount of test subjects being horribly maimed and disfigured, ordered an end to the research. Da Vinci continued his work in secret for some months, but was unable to perfect the pressure

sensitive extraction arms. While in the service of the Duke, one of Leonardo's principal tasks was the creation of new military tools. Although he abhorred war, da Vinci designed a number of weapons, the most impressive of which he called the "gyroscopic whirly-kill." Although it was never built in his lifetime, in 1989 a team of German engineers constructed a working model based on Leonardo's sketches. The machine stood almost twelve feet tall with many rows of serrated blades. During its first and only test run the machine broke free from its system of safety harnesses, killing nine and wounding many others. Another of da Vinci's military creations was designed to save Florence's youth in the event of a hostile invasion. Should the city's walls be breached, aristocratic and privileged children were to be loaded into small, buoyant, cushioned chambers. They would then be launched from a catapult into the nearby Arno River where the children would safely float to a friendly city to be extracted from the water. The Florentine Archbishop reportedly had so much confidence in Leonardo's abilities that he offered his own nephew for the invention's preliminary attempt. The outcome of this test is unknown, but the machine was never used again and da Vinci left the city within days. Many of Leonardo's most intriguing ideas survive today only as vague descriptions and sketches in his notebooks. We are able to catch mere glimpses of notions like his "automated bull castrator," "time-wagon," and the mysteriously titled "Jesus box." Although we know nothing about the intended function of this device, it led artistic and architectural leader Donato Bramante to call Leonardo "merda di pipistrello insano," translating roughly into English as "bat-shit insane."

Socrates, the father of western philosophy, led a fascinating but troubled life. Plato and Xenophon, his students and our main source of information about him, both describe behavior indicating bouts of severe paranoid schizophrenia. Socrates believed everyone plotted against him and that only through extreme mental focus could he pre-



vent his thoughts from being transmitted to his enemies. When the great comedic playwright Aristophanes wrote the play *Clouds* satirizing him in 423 B.C. Socrates flew into a rage, interrupting the performance and publicly demanding that the playwright stay out of his head. He entered a deep depression for a period of some months after proving through simple logic that he did not exist. His 399 B.C. conviction of neglecting the gods of the state and introducing new divinities was probably the result of his frequent hallucinations. He is said to have often run through the Athenian market, screaming of being persecuted by a group of logical fallacies. Socrates' last words before drinking the poisonous hemlock at his execution were a threat to all present. He promised that once his body was dead the "great winds of [his] soul"

would destroy the entire world.

History is full of stories like these. George Washington Carver is thought to have had a powerful lifelong foot fetish. Early drafts of Benjamin Franklin's autobiography included a chapter on his preparations for what he called "the inevitable subterranean wars." Marie Curie often complained that the frying pans were "always telling [her] what to do," though most biographers now attribute this to the advanced stages of radiation poisoning. Hopefully as the secrets of the mind are unlocked mankind will gain a better understanding of the link between genius and madness. Until then, we can only marvel at the amazing lives of history's intellectual giants.



Title: Ambrose
Artist: Amanda Herron
Medium: Photography

Home

Bare floors greet distant hearts, shutter eyes, and cold hands at home.

Where the heart is, where the bills come, where it's never right
to be; who you are is controversy.

Live to better hope and brains that like the sea are dashed against
the jagged rocks of a world's misconception.

Softly killing the heart conceived,
at home nurtured, before its quiet release.

Chelsea Cloud

My Son

Sleeping, dressed in Noah's Ark
Pajamas, animals surround you.
Arms stretched out in submission—
Breathing labored from coagulative
Boogers. Q-Tip hovers — longing to
Obtain its treasure. Dew grazes on your brow.
Fingers curl, a toe twitches. A lion
Paces in spot guarding your upper chest.
Q-Tip loses boldness, retreating to play's
Laughter still reverberant in our home's air.

Annette Wright



Title: Drainage

Artist: Nathan Heald

Medium: Photography

Mother City

This sight was only familiar from travel books and endless pictures searched for online. Houses painted with shades of lemons and limes, robin egg blue and the twilight's pink. A fast paced city moves effortlessly up the towering, table-shaped mountain. Looking to the right, I see the road is clear. I take a step. Honking sounds and warning cries fill my ears. Not right, they say. Look left. Left. The car reminds me of normality. This place is painted like home but is filled with tones, customs, and realities that are not my own. District six, apartheid, and Mandela fill their history books while King, sit-ins and the panthers fill mine. Warmed by the African sun, the salty smell from the breeze coming from the converging oceans reminds me of the thrill of this new place. Three mountains lined by waving palm trees in white beaches. My breathing is rhythmed by the swaying ocean beckoning me to cross. Look left. The memory of large hands, crusted and cracked, calloused by the demands of back breaking work washes to my mind. His hands, though rough, would graze my cheeks with a sweet tenderness and would never forget to slip into my soft, smooth hands as a protective guide when we walked. My lonely hand is now separated from his by half a globe. This city is my paradox. My thrill and my fear. I love what's new but want what's home. Are you my contradiction? A car from my left slows down and stops. It looks like a car I know from home, but it is not. At the green light, the ordinary car in an extraordinary town drives off. He answers being normal is only your band-aid. Drink deeply of me and your opportunity.

Mary Beth Stegall



Title: Untitled
Artist: Lee Lerner
Medium: Photography



Liberties of Youth

Rain's falling

The porch is beginning to shimmer from the wet
The swing creaks as the wind blows us back and forth
The floral cushion sitting on the empty wicker chair across
from me

Expands with water like a sponge

Our legs of only 10 years don't even skim the wooden planks
Nailed to form this century old building called home
You stand and walk to where the wood turns into rose bushes
Picking up the dulled rusted watering pail, you nod twice, the
signal

I stand and walk slowly to pick up my pail on the other side of
the porch

Tilting the pails slightly, allowing only small amounts of the
rain water to fall

We've finished our last chore of the day, we've watered the
roses

Freedom follows

Amy LaRue



Title: Battery
Artist: Amanda Herron
Medium: Photography



Departure

I watched you walk down
the accordion corridor
to the waiting plane

The rules of dating didn't specify
if I should watch the plane
disappear. I didn't.

I passed empty
blue and gray chairs,
and pilots with suitcases
rolling behind them.

I stopped
at an arrival gate—
the crowd huddled around the steel door.
At my elbow,
red and white carnations switched
between the restless hands of a mother,
her salt and pepper hair in stiff curls,
as the walkway traveled out to the plane.

My feet picked up again
and I wondered if,
in a month when you landed,
you'd pick me
out among a different crowd.

Kia Powell

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Images submitted on CD or by e-mail MUST have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. To be safe, set your digital camera to take the highest quality images. When scanning in images, set the resolution on your scanning software BEFORE you scan the image. If you aren't sure how to do this, let us help you! Give us a call at (334) 844-4122. We can also scan or digitally photograph your images for you.

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